



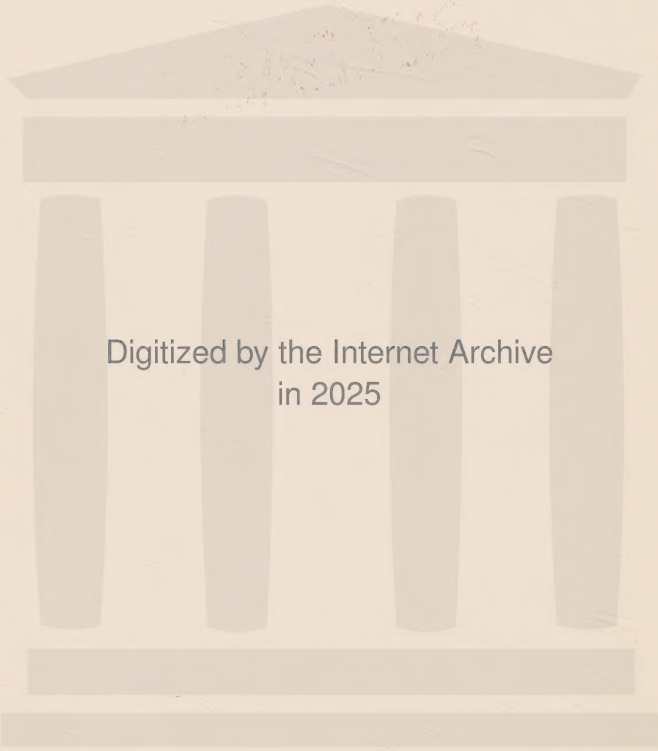


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CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN



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CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN

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TO
MY MOTHER

PREFACE

During the second quarter of the last century a small group of Knickerbocker writers, inspired by a desire to create an American national literature, were busy encouraging younger authors, advocating protection through national and international copyright, establishing magazines, and producing a variety of poetry and fiction of their own. They did not always reach a high level of literary achievement, but all of them had important parts in fostering a national spirit in our literature and deserve something better than the neglect they have often suffered at the hands of recent literary historians. Irving, Bryant, and Cooper stand preëminent among them; but Halleck, W. G. Clark, Willis, and Hoffman were almost equally well known in their day. It was a desire to throw new light upon the activities of this coterie of New Yorkers, and especially upon Charles Fenno Hoffman, of whom no extensive biography has hitherto appeared, that prompted the writing of this book. If Hoffman seems in twentieth-century eyes one of the least of the Knickerbockers, it is partly because the charm of the man himself, which had much to do with the high esteem accorded him by his contemporaries, is never fully manifested in his books. Hoffman's literary work is here examined for the first time against the background of his life.

In gathering my materials I have incurred a large debt to the many librarians who have helped me in securing old files of magazines and newspapers as well as hitherto

unpublished manuscripts. I wish especially to acknowledge my debt to Mr. A. J. Wall and his assistants at the New York Historical Society; to Mr. H. M. Lydenburg and Mr. V. H. Paltsits of the New York Public Library; to Miss Anne S. Pratt of the Library of Yale University; and to Mr. Frederick W. Ashley of the Library of Congress. Other librarians and assistants at the Library of Columbia University, the New York Public Library, the Library of the University of Pennsylvania, the Library of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, and the Newark Public Library, have given me generous help.

To Professor W. P. Trent, at whose suggestion I first began the study of Hoffman, I am grateful for opening up for me such an interesting subject. To Professor Ralph L. Rusk, without whose valuable advice, suggestions, and criticisms this book might not have been written, I am especially indebted. It is a pleasure also to acknowledge my obligation to Professor T. O. Mabbott, who read the manuscript and aided in locating several items of importance; to Professor Lyon N. Richardson, who read the manuscript and offered valuable suggestions in the general plan of the book; to Professor Nelson F. Adkins, who read the manuscript and suggested several sources of information; and to Professor George F. Evans, who read the manuscript.

I wish also to thank Mrs. George A. Boyce of Western Reserve Academy for reading the manuscript and the proof and for assistance in matters of detail.

Finally, I wish to express my appreciation to my wife, who has given freely of her help and has made valuable suggestions concerning the structure of the book.

H. F. B.

CONTENTS

PREFACE	vii
I. ANCESTRY	I
II. YOUTH	19
III. FROM LAW TO LITERATURE	28
IV. A WINTER IN THE WEST	47
V. THE WANDERER TURNS EDITOR	58
VI. THE CRITIC	87
VII. RECOGNIZED AT HOME AND ABROAD	113
VIII. THE POET ASSAILED	136
IX. NATIONALISM AND POETRY	158
X. LAST DAYS	182
APPENDIX A. CORRESPONDENCE	191
APPENDIX B. UNCOLLECTED POEMS	289
APPENDIX C. BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HOFFMAN'S WORKS	317

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN

CHAPTER I

ANCESTRY

Whatever virtue may come of a long and respectable family history must have been a part of the heritage of Charles Fenno Hoffman. He could trace his ancestry not only to the founders of New England, but also, through a distinguished line, to one of the early founders of New York, Martin Hermanzen Hoffman, who came to New Netherland in 1657.¹

This Martin Hermanzen Hoffman had been born in 1625 in Revel, on the Gulf of Finland, a port at that time belonging to Sweden, and was therefore thirty-two years of age when he arrived in America. During his first year in this country, while settled at Esopus (Kingston),² he showed the courage and energy characteristic of his descendants by joining a small company of farmers and putting a stop to the Indian depredations caused by a misunderstanding between the Indians and the Director General. By this act he incurred the enmity of the officials, but won the love of the people.³ Besides managing

1. Margherita Arlina Hamm, *Famous Families of New York*, 1902, Vol. I, p. 170.

2. E. B. O'Callaghan, *History of New Netherland*, 1848, Vol. II, p. 396.

3. Hamm, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

his property he directed a large saddlery and leather business. He was successful not only in business affairs but also in the management of his family. Four of his five children reached maturity, and were wealthy and prosperous.⁴

Captains Zecharias and Nicholaes, Martin's two sons, invested their large earnings wisely in real estate, Zecharias becoming one of the largest landed proprietors in Ulster County, and Nicholaes owning land in both Ulster and Dutchess Counties. They were fortunate in their marriages, for their partners were healthy, vigorous, and able. And, indeed, the Hoffmans were very generally "noted for their health and strength, and for the number of descendants who reached maturity and became parents in their turn."⁵

Nicholaes, the direct ancestor of Charles Fenno Hoffman, married Jannetje Crispell, the daughter of Antonie Crispell,⁶ a Huguenot who settled in this region and was one of the patentees of New Paltz,⁷ Ulster County. According to Holgate, Nicholaes Hoffman by this marriage transmitted "some of the best blood of France"⁸ to the veins of his descendants. Nicholaes and Jannetje had nine children.

Three men uphold the Hoffman name in the third generation. They are Colonel Martin, Judge Anthony, and

4. Hamm, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-71.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 172.

6. Thomas G. Evans, "The Crispell Family of Ulster County, New York," *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record*, Vol. XXI, p. 84.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 84. "Named for the Pfalz, or Palatinate, the hospitable region that had given him shelter when he was forced to flee from Belgium by the long and devastating wars of the Fronde."

8. Jerome B. Holgate, *American Genealogy*, 1848, p. 104.

Captain Zecharias II, all sons of Captain Nicholaes. Colonel Martin built a grist mill, made money rapidly, invested in farms, forests, and water-falls⁹ and, most important of all, fostered the military system of Dutchess County with such ardor that when the Revolution broke out Dutchess County was far from unprepared. Nine of his ten children grew up and were married, and each was given an estate large enough to make him affluent. His brother, Judge Anthony, one of the signers, in 1775, of the "Revolutionary Pledge" or "The Articles of Association,"¹⁰ was a member of the Provincial Congress, a judge of Dutchess County, and a Regent of the University of the State of New York. He built and operated several mills, stores, and sloops, and was fortunate in his dealings. The third brother, Zecharias II, like his brother Anthony, was also a signer of the "Revolutionary Pledge" and, like both his brothers, had a large estate. A traveler once asking a Redhook man who owned the property thereabouts was answered petulantly: "Everything you can see on this side of the river is Hoffman's, and also on the other side. He does not own the river yet, but he hopes to before he dies."¹¹ From this remark it is easily seen that the Hoffman family was very prominent and that this prominence was due to its skill in busi-

9. On February 19, 1775, he received for the sum of 1900 pounds sterling, a conveyance of land in Dutchess County from Anthony Yelverton, consisting of "ten-elevenths of a tract of land, mills, houses, gardens, orchards, pastures, stones, woods, underwoods, woodland, water-courses, streams, creeks and runs of water, falls, dams, mines, and minerals." (Book B, pp. 9ff., in the County Clerk's office at Poughkeepsie.)

10. Alphonso T. Clearwater, *The History of Ulster County, New York*, 1907, p. 125.

11. Hamm, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

ness affairs and to the energy with which it pursued its enterprises.

Some members of the fourth generation continued to add renown to the name of Hoffman. Colonel Robert settled in Poughkeepsie, was a major of militia at the age of eighteen, and had charge of raising troops in Dutchess and Westchester Counties for the American forces in the Revolutionary War. Five other brothers also gained distinction: Colonel Anthony, the patriot; Captain Harmanus, the high sheriff; Captain Martin, the soldier and farmer; Lieutenant Zecharias; and Philip, the lawyer. But probably the most distinguished of this family of brothers was Nicholas, the grandfather of Charles Fenno. Although he was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth, he was willed one by his grandfather, who seems to have considered this an omen of prosperity.¹² Nicholas Hoffman moved to Newark, New Jersey, and had business interests in both Newark and New York. He was elected a member of the General Committee for the City and County of New York, chosen the first of May, 1775.¹³ It was while living in Newark that he met Sarah Ogden, daughter of John and Gertrude Gouverneur Ogden, whom he married November 14, 1762.

It was this Sarah Ogden's father whom Hatfield, an enthusiastic contemporary, described as " 'Good old John Ogden,' whose wanderings for forty years had justly

12. Nicholas, born in 1736, was left "one silver spoon" by his grandfather's will, dated February 12, 1749, filed in the *Book of Deeds* in the County Clerk's office at Kingston, N. Y. His cousin, Nicholas, was likewise left one silver spoon while "all the other silver spoons with the exception of these two" were willed to his daughter Mary.

13. *Documents relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, ed. by E. B. O'Callaghan, 1857, Vol. VIII, p. 600.

entitled him to rank with the 'Pilgrim Fathers,'—the acknowledged pioneer of the town, . . . the accepted leader of the people, a pillar in the church and in the State, honored and trusted by all. . . . A man he was of more than ordinary mark—a man of sterling worth; of whom the town, as well as his numerous posterity, should be gratefully mindful." ¹⁴

Gertrude Gouverneur was the daughter of Abraham Gouverneur and Mary Leisler Milbourne,¹⁵ daughter of Jacob Leisler ¹⁶ and widow of the bold Captain Milbourne who died on the scaffold with his father-in-law in

14. Edwin Francis Hatfield, *Collections of the New Jersey Historical Society, History of Elizabeth*, 1868, pp. 196-97.

15. Eugene Augustus Hoffman, *Hoffman Genealogy*, 1899, "Appendix," p. 494.

16. Jacob Leisler arrived in New Amsterdam in 1660 shortly before it passed from the rule of the Dutch West India Company. In 1689 he seized the Fort—for the preservation, as he contended, of the Protestant religion—and declared for the Prince of Orange. As "Captain of the Fort" he built the extension now known as the Battery. Shortly after his overthrow by Governor Sloughter he was hanged with Captain Milbourne for high treason in the City Hall Park, 1691, and his estate was forfeited to the Crown. As the new governor could not be prevailed upon to sign the death warrant while sober, Leisler's enemies, if newspaper accounts can be relied upon, got him drunk in order to make him sign it. (*New York City in Olden Times; consisting of Newspaper Cuttings arranged by Henry Onderdonk, Jr.*, 1863, pp. 128-29. Copy, New York Public Library.) It is exceedingly difficult to come to a definite decision as to the merits of the case of Leisler, but the fact stands that Parliament, in 1695, passed an act reversing the attainder, and the State of New York indemnified his heirs. His bones, and those of Milbourne, were taken up in 1698, and honorably interred in the old Dutch Church. For what is evidently a partisan view favoring Leisler see E. S. Brooks in his "Preface" to *In Leisler's Times*, 1880. Edward Channing, *A History of the United States*, 1924, Vol. II, p. 296, and Woodrow Wilson, *A History of the American People*, 1903, Vol. I, p. 335, give a more moderate view, showing Leisler as being hot-headed and willful, but meeting an undeserved end.

1691.¹⁷ Thus, Charles Fenno Hoffman was a direct descendant of Jacob Leisler, whom Hoffman himself in a public lecture enthusiastically called the first representative of the people in the United States.¹⁸

Sarah Ogden Hoffman seems to have been distinguished for her piety and kindness of heart. She was accustomed to visit the poor quarters of the city to administer to the wants of the sick and the destitute.¹⁹ She was the first directress of the Orphan Asylum of New York City, founded in 1806, and in that capacity was responsible for the collection of funds for building in the Village of Greenwich an orphanage, which was able to care for over one hundred children. Frequently during the winter months she searched "garrets, cellars, and other places of obscurity" for children who needed the care of the orphanage.²⁰ Under her management this institution, with the help of an annual appropriation from the state of only \$500, was able to enlist enough popular support to meet the running expenses of over \$5,000 a year.

17. See Charles Fenno Hoffman, "The Administration of Jacob Leisler," in Vol. XIII of Sparks's *American Biography*, for a full account of this.

18. Leisler's great-grandson, Nicholas Gouverneur, is said by Gouverneur Kemble to have built the famous Cockloft Hall of *Salmagundi* fame near Newark. It was here that James K. Paulding, Washington and William Irving, Henry Brevoort and "other merry young blades, who made the old mansion gay with their fun and frolic," were often found. (*The Memorial History of the City of New-York*, ed. by J. G. Wilson, 1893, Vol. IV, p. 55.)

19. John Stanford, "A Discourse Delivered in the Orphan Asylum of New York on the Death of Mrs. Sarah Ogden Hoffman," 1821, p. 29, in John Stanford's *Collection of Discourses Delivered on Public Occasions* (n.d.).

20. T. Sharp, *The Heavenly Sisters or Biographical Sketches of the Lives of Thirty Eminently Pious Females*, 1822, p. 122.

The career of the family during the first four generations in America was notable in many respects. "In peace and in war, in church ²¹ and in state, the descendants of Martinus Hoffman have made their marks and made them creditably," says a later writer; and "health, longevity, commercial talent, patriotism, piety, and the performance of public duty were its characteristics." ²²

With the fifth generation the family began to win distinction in the learned professions, in finance, and in commerce. Martin, the merchant, son of Nicholas, was noted for his public spirit, was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, a sachem of Tammany Hall, and a grand master of Freemasonry. Dr. William Hoffman, son of Harmanus, was a well-known physician who devoted much of his time to gratuitous practice among the poor immigrants of Westchester County. When he was buried he was said to have had the largest funeral ever known in that district.²³ Philip Verplanck Hoffman, brother of Dr. William, was admitted to the bar and practiced creditably, but soon retired, because, as he said, he did not have the eloquence of his cousin, Josiah Ogden Hoffman, the father of Charles Fenno.

Dr. Richard Kissam and Dr. Adrian, brothers, and their cousin, Anthony N., an inventor and writer, all cousins of Josiah Ogden Hoffman, added to what had now become a somewhat monotonous record of successful

21. Mitchell C. Harrison, *New York State's Prominent and Progressive Men*, 1900, Vol. I, p. 174. Harrison's desire for rhetorical effect may account for his statement that the Hoffmans were prominent church leaders, since the available records have shown none of the earlier members of the family as entering the ministry or being especially prominent in the church.

22. Hamm, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 178.

Hoffman careers. Dr. Richard Anthony served with distinction in the Navy and was killed by a cannon shot in the War of 1812. His father, Captain Beekman V. Hoffman, was on the frigate *Constitution*, "Old Ironsides," and took part in all her battles. He was said to bear a charmed life, having fought in twenty battles without receiving an injury.

But the man of this generation who demands particular attention is the honored jurist, Josiah Ogden Hoffman, father of the poet. Josiah Ogden Hoffman, born in Newark, New Jersey, April 14, 1766, was admitted to the bar at an early age.²⁴ He won his first case at the age of seventeen when he was allowed to speak because of the absence of the lawyer who was conducting the case and under whom he was studying; and later he became a very distinguished lawyer at a time when there were "giants" at the New York bar.²⁵ He was especially successful in the examination of witnesses and in his appeal to juries. With his pleasing personality and his powers of oratory he was able to forge to the front among such men as Alexander Hamilton, Chancellor Kent, and John Jay. At the famous New York celebration of the adoption of the Constitution in 1788 Judge Hoffman, as president, headed the Philological Society, which a later writer²⁶ has called the most erudite organization in the country at that time. The standard of the Society was borne in this

24. See footnote 20, p. 26 below, on Charles Fenno Hoffman and records of admission to the New York bar.

25. William Leete Stone, *History of New York City*, 1872, p. 341.

26. Hamm (*op. cit.*, p. 177) perhaps grew fulsome in praise of this organization, for the American Philosophical Society was also a learned society.

parade by William Dunlap; and Noah Webster, the lexicographer and one of the founders of the Society, was in the procession.²⁷ In 1791 Hoffman was elected Grand Sachem of Tammany Hall, which had been established May 12, 1789, shortly after Washington's inauguration, and which was for some years composed of the moderate men of both parties and was not regarded as a party institution until the time of President Jefferson.²⁸ Judge Hoffman was three times a member of the New York Assembly, and in 1798, at the age of 32, was Attorney-General of the state. In the state election of 1809 the Federalists were successful, and Pierre C. Van Wyck was removed from the recordership to make room for Hoffman. In 1810 Van Wyck was restored to office, but was removed again in 1813 in favor of Hoffman, who served as Recorder for the next two years.²⁹ Among his other honors he counted not the least that of being a pall-bearer of Alexander Hamilton.³⁰ He was also a prosecutor of Hamilton's enemy, Burr, and was "assisted" in the conduct of the case by Washington Irving, who was then studying law under his tutelage. With his inheritance and his lucrative law practice Judge Hoffman was a very affluent citizen. He lived in 1799 in a suburban home valued at £2,000 sterling.³¹

In 1806 Judge Hoffman had moved to town and was living at the corner of Rector and Greenwich Streets. By

27. Stone, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

28. Martha Lamb, *History of the City of New York*, 1896, Vol. III, p. 362.

29. Mary L. Booth, *History of New York*, 1867, Vol. II, p. 689.

30. James G. Wilson, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 164.

31. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 152.

1809 he had moved about fifteen blocks up town to the corner of Broadway and Leonard Street, where he occupied a "square house of many rooms, indeed it was a mansion in the city of 1809."³² The book of deeds of the city of New York (No. 689) shows that he bought fifteen pieces of property and sold ninety-five; yet when he died on the twenty-fourth day of January, 1837, without a will, his son Ogden Hoffman, in petitioning the Surrogate of the County of New York to be appointed administrator, valued his father's property "at not over \$1000."³³

Judge Hoffman's grandson, Edward Fenno Hoffman, an attorney of Philadelphia, is authority for the statement that his money was lost, not through his own neglect, but by assuming responsibility for a promissory note which he had endorsed. This loss of his money seems important, for if the Judge had left even a portion of his one-time large estate to his children, the work of Charles Fenno might have been of greater note. Without financial worries, the young writer might have been able to pursue his literary ambitions and to carry on his magazine ventures at a time when all magazines led a very precarious existence. His works might then have received the extra polish that would have brought them from high mediocrity to real excellence, although it is true that when Hoffman was not pressed financially his tendency toward laziness often overcame his desire for accomplishment.³⁴ While the father left the son no monetary inheritance, he

32. Charles Hemstreet, *Literary New York*, 1903, p. 95.

33. Petition of Ogden Hoffman filed in Surrogate, City Hall, New York.

34. See Hoffman to Rufus W. Griswold, p. 223.

did leave him an inheritance of keen intellect with a literary trend. Even though Judge Hoffman was not primarily a literary man, he was a member, with Charles Brockden Brown³⁵ and others, of that well-known literary club called the Drone, or the Friendly Club;³⁶ and J. W. Francis called attention to the fact that he "occasionally furnished a law decision, sometimes an Indian fragment, and sometimes a poetic stave."³⁷

Judge Hoffman's daughter, Charles Fenno Hoffman's half-sister, was the Matilda Hoffman who was to have married Washington Irving, and whose early death seems to have left a permanent mark upon the life of that author.³⁸ Charles Fenno's half-brother, Ogden Hoffman, was a gallant naval officer, whose resignation, following the War of 1812, caused Decatur to regret that his subordinate had "exchanged an honorable profession for that of a lawyer."³⁹

35. David Lee Clark, *Charles Brockden Brown*, 1923, p. 40.

36. R. T. Hymnsfeld, *Literary Societies and Associations in New York City 1790-1830*, 1926, pp. 20-21. Unpublished essay in New York Historical Society.

37. *Old New York*, 1858, Vol. II, p. 290.

38. The question of just what effect Matilda Hoffman's death had on Irving has been widely discussed. Mr. George S. Hellman in *Washington Irving Esquire*, 1925, p. 49, maintains that "The legend that Washington Irving remained a lifelong bachelor because of Matilda Hoffman's death half a century before his own, is due solely to the sentimental desire of his nephew and first biographer, Pierre M. Irving. In his attempt to perpetuate this gentle myth, Pierre M. Irving has recourse to comments, to suppressions, and to elisions whose nature is now apparent through a careful study of Irving's Dresden diaries." Professor Stanley T. Williams, however (*American Speech*, Vol. I, pp. 463-69, June, 1926), shows by the publication of various letters, that, in spite of the later interest which Irving manifested in Emily Foster, Matilda Hoffman's death left its mark upon him.

39. Hamm, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

Charles Fenno Hoffman was given his middle name in honor of his mother's family, which, while not quite so distinguished as his father's, was well known in Boston and Milton, Massachusetts. John Fenno, a native of Lancashire, England, who first appeared at Milton about 1660, at the age of thirty-one, established the American branch of this family. At Milton he erected his house on the road leading to the Blue Hills, one of which was for many years called Fenno Hill, though the name has recently been changed by the Metropolitan Park Commission to Kitchamakin Hill.⁴⁰ The Fenno family was composed largely of farmers and storekeepers who were active in public affairs in the colonial and Revolutionary periods.⁴¹ In John Fenno, grandfather of the poet, we find, however, a journalistic talent which led to the founding of one of the most noted newspapers of the late eighteenth century, *The United States Gazette*.

John Fenno was born in Boston August 12, 1751, and was very probably the same John Fenno who, at the death of Joshua Loring in 1781, settled the latter's estate valued at over £26,000. Loring's house in Boston was next to the South Writing School adjoining the Common,⁴² where John Fenno was certainly for several years a teacher.⁴³ Deciding that New York offered more opportunities for advancement than Boston, Fenno set out with

40. Lulu May Fenno Woolson, *Woolson Fenno Ancestry*, privately printed, 1907, p. 26.

41. A. H. Bent, "The Fenno Family," *New York Historical & Genealogical Register*, October 1898, pp. 3-11.

42. *Memorial History of Boston*, ed. by Justin Winsor, 1881, Vol. III, p. 179.

43. John Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia*, 1884, Vol. III, p. 1968.

a letter of introduction from Christopher Gore to Rufus King. This letter asserted that his literary accomplishments were very handsome, that his honor and fidelity were unquestionable, and that his talents as the editor of a public paper were unrivaled in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.⁴⁴ On April 11, 1789, through the efforts of King and Hamilton, John Fenno established at 9 Maiden Lane, New York, *The United States Gazette*, regarded as the government organ.⁴⁵ When the seat of government was removed from New York to Philadelphia, Fenno followed with his paper, the first Philadelphia issue bearing the date of April 14, 1790. In this city Fenno continued to support with little difficulty the policies of Hamilton in all matters of government until Philip Freneau, of the sharp tongue and satiric pen, established his paper, *The National Gazette*, with the determination to wage war on autocracy. This struck a new note in political journalism; and the bitter attacks launched by Freneau forced Fenno to defend himself and his policies in every issue.⁴⁶ Presently Hamilton was drawn in to help silence Freneau. And then came the climax of the well-known personal war between Hamilton and Jefferson, for Hamilton charged his opponent with writing these attacks which appeared in Freneau's paper, and this was one of the final acts directly responsible for Jefferson's resignation from the cabinet.⁴⁷

44. Charles R. King, *The Life and Correspondence of Rufus King*, 1888, Vol. I, p. 357.

45. J. G. Wilson, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 55.

46. Samuel E. Forman, *The Political Activities of Philip Freneau*, *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science*, Series 20, Nos. 9-10, 1902, p. 42.

47. Claude G. Bowers, *Jefferson and Hamilton*, 1925, p. 169.

Although no match for the satiric Freneau, Fenno conducted this paper for five years after his opponent's *Gazette* was discontinued.⁴⁸ His editorship did not terminate until his death on September 14, 1798, from yellow fever, which at this time was raging in Boston and New York as well as in Philadelphia.⁴⁹ At his death, Fisher Ames in a letter to Thomas Dwight, September 25, 1798, exclaimed: "Alas, poor John Fenno, a worthy man, a true federalist, always firm in his principles, mild in maintaining them, and bitter against foes and persecutors. No printer was ever so *correct* in his politics."⁵⁰ His son, John Ward Fenno, then only nineteen years of age, took up the publication and continued it until May, 1800, after which there seems to be no further mention of him in the columns of the paper. This newspaper responsibility brought John Fenno and his family into contact with important political contemporaries, and it is very probable that General Washington visited at their house, for both John Ward Fenno and his father were intimate friends of General Knox, one of Washington's closest friends and favored commanders. In a letter to his wife, written from Boston September 23, 1797, John Fenno says: "I dined yesterday with Gen'l Knox. His conclusions from reading the papers without any observa-

48. Victor Hugo Paltsits, *A Bibliography of the Separate and Collected Works of Philip Freneau*, 1903, p. 9.

49. *The United States Gazette* of Monday evening, September 17, which announces the death of John Fenno, says that his son, John W. Fenno, will in the future conduct the paper. It also states that 23 men, 8 women, and 8 children had been buried in the last 24 hours and that 28 of those deaths were due to the prevailing fever.

50. *Works of Fisher Ames*, ed. by Seth Ames, 1854, Vol. I, p. 240.

tions from me, were exactly the same with Wards." ⁵¹ Through his editorship of the "court journal" Fenno had intimate contact with many of the leading Federalists of the country.

Mr. Edward Fenno Hoffman, in his pamphlet of privately published letters, says that John Ward Fenno, son of John Fenno, was the father ⁵² of Maria Fenno, the poet's mother, and Dean Eugene Augustus Hoffman in his *Hoffman Genealogy* makes the same statement. It seems, however, that they have confused John Fenno and John Ward Fenno, father and son.⁵³

The marriage of Mary Curtis to John Fenno seems fairly well established from the Boston documents, and when we read in a letter from John Fenno to his wife

51. *Hoffman Family Letters*, ed. by E. F. Hoffman, privately printed, 1903, p. 6. This was evidently his son, John Ward Fenno, who later succeeded his father as editor of the *Gazette*.

52. By Mary Curtis of Boston.

53. In the first place John Fenno, who was born in 1751, could not well have been at the age of fifty-two the grandfather of a child married in 1802, and certainly John Ward Fenno, who was only nineteen years of age at his father's death in 1798, could not possibly have been the father of a child married in 1802. *The City Document of Marriages of Boston, No. 101*, shows that John Fenno (not John Ward Fenno) and Mary Curtis were married May 8, 1777. In a letter written from Boston (*Hoffman Family Letters*, privately published) September 23, 1797, addressed to "Polly" (nickname for Mary, probably Mary Curtis, as will be seen from the quotation), John Fenno says: "I thought my visit to Capt. Curtis had been mentioned. It was one of the first. You know we arrived on Saturday, and on Monday I went to Mr. Durant's and the same day called at Capt. Curtis's. He was not at home. I made inquiries of his sons respecting the folks at Eastward. Your father, mother and Peggy were well last Fall. It is two years since he was here." This is evidently the husband of Mary Curtis writing; if he were not the husband of Mary Curtis he would not be so solicitous about the welfare of the Eastward family of Curtises, and he would not refer to them as "your father" and "mother."

(see note 53) on September 23, 1797, "By last mail Son's letter of 18th to Maria was received," it would seem that this Maria was his daughter and was sister to the John Ward Fenno who conducted *The United States Gazette* at the age of nineteen. Maria Fenno was a "highly intellectual lady, and endowed with rare qualities of head and heart."⁵⁴ Her friendship with Washington Irving was sincere and enduring, as several letters in the biography of the latter amply testify.⁵⁵ A number of his letters are addressed to her. " 'She was like a sister to me' is the language in which he once wrote of her."⁵⁶ Mrs. Hoffman had several brothers and sisters; and Charles Fenno Hoffman was named for one of her brothers. This uncle of the poet obtained a commission as midshipman in the English navy and served on the *Bellerophon*, which afterwards transported Napoleon to St. Helena, and he remained in the British Navy from 1802 until the time of his death. Under "Cochrane the Dauntless" and Sir Charles Duckworth, he was engaged in many battles with the French. There was the warmest feeling existing between Charles Fenno and the Hoffman family. Shortly after his sister's marriage he expressed (August 17, 1802) to his brother George his approval of their new brother-in-law:

Maria (will you believe it) is married to Mr. J. O. Hoffman, formerly attorney General of this State. This must give you great joy I know especially when you are told that he is a man universally respected and one of the first lawyers in the State.⁵⁷

54. W. W. Waldron, *Washington Irving and Cotemporaries in Thirty Life Sketches*, n.d. (c. 1850), p. 236.

55. Pierre M. Irving, *The Life and Letters of Washington Irving*, 1862, Vol. I, pp. 191, 217, 243, etc.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

57. *Hoffman Family Letters*, pp. 11-12.

And then shortly after the birth of Charles Fenno Hoffman he wrote his sister:

I am at a loss in what terms to speak of Mr. H.'s exertions for my interest. I have somewhere read that overredundant gratitude is more offensive than is ingratitude itself. Knowing his delicacy and valuing his opinion as I do my very existence, I did not give vent to my feelings on answering his letter, but rather repressed them.⁵⁸

Two long-established, highly-esteemed, socially and politically prominent lines, both known for their literary talents,⁵⁹ were united in the marriage of Josiah Ogden Hoffman and Maria Fenno.

58. *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30 (Sept. 20, 1806).

59. Two other examples besides those of John Fenno and John Ward Fenno already mentioned indicate the literary trend of the Fenno mind. Edward Fenno in writing to Ogden Hoffman, half-brother of Charles Fenno Hoffman, who had "exchanged an honorable profession for that of a lawyer," wrote a poem to Ogden about Emily, Ogden's sweetheart, who later became his wife:

"Dear Ogden:

In reading a volume entitled beauties of Goldsmith I met the following passage 'The sounds of music as they vibrate o'er the long drawn vallies are not sweeter to the ear, than the tidings of a far distant friend' and it occurred to me

That if he had e'er heard the sweet nightingale note,
Which we have heard warbled, from *Emily's* throat,
Had he caught that note's echo, while dying it lingers,
As if charmed, on the keys, touched by *Emily's* fingers,
Had his bosom, like yours, throbb'd with pleasure and pride
While she chanted your favorite 'Soldier's Bride,'
Had his eye ever gazed on the roseate glow,
In color like rosebuds, reflected on snow,
Which suffused both her cheeks, at hearing recited,
Th' applauses and praise, which her song had excited,
I think such a speech he could never have made,
Or convinced and repenting would wish it unsaid.

But if *hearing* and *seeing*, he still thought it true,
He would surely have lost all his credit with you."
(*Hoffman Family Letters*, p. 56.)

Maria Fenno is given credit by her brother Edward for writing the best letter he ever received: "Your letter was so full of all I wished to know that if I were to see you now, I should have nothing to ask. You appear to have caught some of Washington's inspiration in writing it, and I shall treasure it up, as the best letter *I* ever received. Do not think I would *dare* to flatter you." (*Hoffman Family Letters*, p. 61.)

CHAPTER II

YOUTH

Charles Fenno Hoffman was born in New York, February 7, 1806.¹ A letter from Washington Irving to Hoffman's sister Ann describes him, in his second year, as "quite unwell & rather unmanageable."² And the next bit of biographical information comes also from Irving, whose letter written to Mrs. Hoffman shortly after his return from a trip with them to Philadelphia might indicate that Charles, now not quite four and a half years of age, had already learned to read: "Tell Charles I will be able to write to him about the beginning of the week."³ But this, of course, does not necessarily mean that Charles was expected to read the letter himself. Very little is known about his early training except that he

1. E. A. Hoffman, *op. cit.*, p. 282, is the best source available for this date. No New York City records prior to 1835 are in existence.

2. Stanley T. Williams, in an article on "Washington Irving and Matilda Hoffman" in *American Speech*, Vol. I, pp. 465-66 (June, 1926), quotes this letter of August 10, 1807, from Irving and gives in a footnote its strange history: "This letter was first published in a newspaper of St. Paul, Minnesota, the *Daily News*, April 18, 1920. The original was owned by Mrs. Ann Hoffman Molony-Neely (Mrs. Charles M. Neely), the granddaughter of Ann Hoffman. A copy of the letter was given by Mrs. Neely, among other documents, in 1920, to the Minnesota Historical Society. Concerning this letter Mrs. Neely wrote: 'The original I loaned to his [Washington Irving's] biographer, P. M. Irving, upon condition that he would return them [letters to Ann Hoffman], which he has not done yet (1862).'"

3. Pierre M. Irving, *The Life and Letters of Washington Irving*, 1862, Vol. I, p. 252.

attended the public schools until he was nine years of age.⁴ At the age of nine he was sent to the Dutchess County Academy at Poughkeepsie, the first school of the kind established in the county.⁵ But since his treatment there did not seem to accord well with the treatment he was receiving at home, he ran away. His father, not wishing to force him to return in the face of conditions he would have to meet there, changed his school.

In 1815, at the age of nine, he had the good fortune to be placed under the care of Mr. George Perrott McCulloch,⁶ an accomplished Scotch clergyman of wide ex-

4. R. W. Griswold in his *The Poets and Poetry of America*, 1842, p. 259, says that Hoffman was sent to a Latin grammar school in New York when six years old, "from which, at the age of nine, he was transferred to the Poughkeepsie academy. . . . The harsh treatment he received here induced him to run away, and his father, finding that he had not improved under a course of severity, did not insist upon his return, but placed him under the care of an accomplished Scottish gentleman in one of the rural villages of New Jersey."

5. James H. Smith, *History of Dutchess County*, New York, 1882, p. 407, says that the Dutchess County Academy was incorporated Feb. 1, 1792; Cornelius Brower was Principal 1794-1807 and was succeeded by Daniel H. Barnes. According to Philip H. Smith, *General History of Dutchess County*, 1877, p. 213, the academy was first erected near Brinckerhoffville before the Revolution, and shortly after the war was removed to Poughkeepsie. Dr. John B. Livingston and other distinguished men received training here.

6. Francis B. Lee, *General and Memorial History of the State of New Jersey*, 1910, Vol. III, p. 932: Mr. McCulloch was born in Bombay in 1775, his father being in command of the Fifteenth Sepoys of the East India Company. Upon the death of his parents by poison in India, George was sent by George Perrott, who was one of Warren Hastings's Council and after whom he was named, to the University of Edinburgh, where he received a liberal education, becoming the master of five languages. He engaged in business in England and carried on important negotiations at Madrid and Paris, and in Holland, at one time having to pass through Napoleon's army as a German. His health being impaired he came to America in 1806 with his wife

perience living in Morristown, New Jersey. Here he was very happy.⁷

It was during a visit to his home from Morristown that Hoffman met with an accident which necessitated the amputation of the right leg above the knee. *The New-York Evening Post* for Saturday, October 25, 1817, has the following brief notice, which also appears in the *New-York Gazette*:

We regret to state, that a serious accident happened last evening to a son of Josiah Ogden Hoffman, esq. He was sitting on Courtlandt-street dock, with his legs hanging over the wharf, as the steam-boat was coming in; which caught one of his legs, and crushed it in a dreadful manner, against the wharf. He was immediately carried home, and surgical aid being obtained, it was thought necessary to amputate the leg above the knee.⁸

The New-York Evening Post of Monday, October 27, the *Commercial Advertiser* of Tuesday, October 28, and *The Herald* of October 29, all give the following correction and graphic enlargement of the above brief notice.⁹

Shocking Accident—The paragraph which we re-published on Saturday, from the *New-York Gazette*, respecting the shocking

and two children, and settled in Morristown, New Jersey, where he bought a large estate. A few years later he lost most of the property he had brought from England and in 1814 started a boys' boarding school which he conducted with great success for about fifteen years, having boys from many prominent families of New York. He took a very active part in the life of the community; his school at one time, about 1820, was used on Sundays for the Episcopal Church service which was conducted by Mr. Cummins, who was the assistant teacher in the school and an Episcopal Minister.

7. *History of Morris County*, 1882, p. 151.

8. *The Herald* (semi-weekly) also copies this notice in the edititon appearing on Saturday, October 25.

9. The *Gazette* does not give this correction.

accident which happened to Mr. Hoffman's son, a lad of about 12 years of age, being found to be incorrect, we have ascertained the following to have been the facts. The boy was standing upon the wharf, waiting till the boat approached near enough to permit him to jump on board, as he supposed, as she entered the slip, in order to get a ride, as it is called, of a few yards before she stopt. He, however, jumped short, and one of his legs was caught between the boat and the wharf, and mangled in the most shocking manner. He then turned and caught hold of the wharf with one hand, screaming for help; but he would have fallen and death inevitably ensued, had he not been rescued from his dreadful situation by the resolution and activity of a sailor, who glided from the rigging of a vessel lying at the head of the slip, jumped over a high fence and ran and caught the boy in his arms, calling to several people, who were looking on, to know who he was. Although the youth was in an agony not to be described, with his leg twisted twice round, the knee-pan torn from its place, the bones quite bare and all covered with blood, he yet had his senses, and told the kind preserver of his life, his name, in what street, and at what no. his father lived. But he enquired for the nearest surgeon, and carried him directly to the house of Dr. Kissam, who, however, was not at home, but soon came in, and he again carried him to the house of his father, where the limb was amputated above the knee. . . . The fortitude with which he bore his sufferings, both from the terrible wound, and from the amputation itself, is spoken of, by those who witnessed it, in terms of astonishment.

The lad recollects that some one was at work so near that he might have caught him and saved him from the injury, but the poor man in the alarm at what he saw was about to happen, lost his presence of mind, and ran away. He says, too, there were several people near him when he lay between the boat and the wharf, but that none of them stirred to his assistance, or offered to relieve him till the sailor appeared.

This accident called forth a letter of sympathy from Washington Irving, in Liverpool, to Mrs. Hoffman:

My dear Mrs. Hoffman:

Liverpool, Nov. 23, 1817.

It is with the utmost concern that I have heard of the accident that has happened to Charles, not merely on his account, but on account of the shock it must have given to your feelings, already so much harassed by repeated afflictions. I hope the poor little fellow has recovered his health, and that you have been enabled to sustain this new trial with your accustomed resignation.

. . . The heart must battle with its own sorrows, and subdue them in silence; and there are some minds, as there are bodies, of such pure and healthful temperament, that they have within their natures a healing balm to medicine their own wounds and bruises. To the soothing influence of such a spirit, my dear friend, I trust for your once more recovering tranquility after all the sorrows and bereavements you have suffered. . . .

I long to see you all once more; but when it will be my lot, I cannot tell. My future prospects are somewhat dark and uncertain; but I hope for the best, and that I may yet find wholesome fruit springing out of trouble and adversity.

Give Mr. Hoffman my faithful and affectionate recollections; tell Charles I am glad to hear that he stood his sufferings like a man. . . .

Yours as ever,

WASHINGTON IRVING.¹⁰

Several of Hoffman's acquaintances are authorities for the statement that this deprivation, instead of turning him into a retired student and acting as a disqualification for the active, outdoor sports, had exactly the opposite effect and made him especially ambitious to excel in swimming and rowing even to the detriment of his studies.¹¹ Just one year after this accident Charles's

10. P. M. Irving, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 389-91.

11. R. W. Griswold, *The Poets and Poetry of America*, 1842, p. 259.

uncle, Edward Fenno, wrote to his brother James, at Charleston, South Carolina: "Charles accompanied me to F—— [Fishkill] and is still there. He is very active swims and rides perfectly well, and walked constantly apparently without fatigue."¹²

This recovery is very significant, for it shows that Charles Fenno did not allow the accident materially to reduce his physical activity, and it makes believable the otherwise almost incredible feats he performed while on trips such as he described in *A Winter in the West*.

After completing his work in McCulloch's School, Charles entered Columbia College. At a special meeting of the Columbia College Board of Governors for the admission of new candidates on September 29, 1821, he received a rating which could scarcely have been a matter of pride for the young student. "The examination for candidates for admission into the Freshman class being concluded the Board proceeded to rank them according to their respective merits; when the following order and arrangement was adopted: . . ." So runs the entry in the record of the Trustees. Then follows a full list of the thirty-eight members of the Freshman class, with Charles F. Hoffman ranking thirty-fifth. At the semiannual re-ranking on March 30 he had risen to thirty-third place, but during his entire two years at Columbia he was never out of the lower fifth of his class.¹³ These examinations for ranking were held in public, notice of the time of their commencement being given in two of the daily papers

12. Edward Fenno to James Fenno, October 17, 1818, *Hoffman Family Letters*, p. 42.

13. *Record of the Proceedings of the Board of Columbia College*, p. 110. MS. in Trustees' Room, Columbia University.

published in the city; and the Regents, Trustees, parents, guardians, and such other people as the President might think proper were requested to attend.¹⁴ Probably his low ranking and the embarrassment which he doubtless experienced at the public examinations had something to do with his leaving Columbia¹⁵ at the end of his sophomore year to go to Albany to study law.¹⁶

There is no record of any disciplinary measures against Hoffman while he was a student at Columbia, and the cause of his leaving the college is not mentioned in the minutes. Had he been requested to withdraw, the minutes would almost certainly have stated the fact, as they did in other cases. Perhaps the Board simply ignored his case as that of a lazy student whose exit from the college was unworthy of their notice.

Whatever the circumstances of his withdrawal from college, he made an easy transition into the life outside the academic walls. He was fortunate enough to secure, through his father, a place in the law office of the Honorable Harmanus Bleecker. Bleecker practiced in partner-

14. *A History of Columbia University, 1754-1904*, 1904, pp. 107-8.

15. Hoffman's course of study at Columbia is not obtainable; but it is probable that he took Latin, Greek, and mathematics. His letters have frequent quotations from both Greek and Latin, which were part of the usual curriculum. Hoffman evidently did not take his work at Columbia too seriously if one may judge from a reference in "Fascination" (*The Literary World*, Vol. III, p. 825, November 18, 1848), where he refers to "the rattling talk of us Columbia boys, as we trudged home from Lecture making our jokes upon the fluttering crowd in Broadway."

16. Although Hoffman did not graduate, the college was pleased to grant him in 1837, along with Bryant, Halleck, and Irving, his A.M. (Hon.) degree. (See Columbia University publications of degrees granted, also the *New-York Commercial Advertiser*, April 14, 1837, p. 2, cols. 1-2, for account of this "Literary Jubilee" and celebration of Columbia College's first semicentennial anniversary.)

ship with Theodore Sedgwick II. Sedgwick's wife was Susan Ridley, the author, and his sister was Catherine Maria Sedgwick, whose first book, *A New England Tale*, had just been published in 1822. The business connection with Sedgwick doubtless led to an acquaintance with Susan Ridley and Catherine Sedgwick, and this relationship with two well-known authors may have had a great deal to do with his showing more interest in literature than in law.

Although Bleeker had already been a member of Congress and later (1839-42) was to be American chargé d'affaires at The Hague, and although many famous lawyers studied under his tutelage, he does not appear to have inspired his protégé with any ardor for the law.¹⁷ Hoffman seems to have chosen good companions in Albany, and was later happy to number among his early friends in that city John B. Van Schaick, who also studied under Harmanus Bleeker and who opened his law office in Albany, November 16, 1824.¹⁸ Even while studying for admission to the bar Hoffman contributed anonymously to "the gazettes of Albany."¹⁹

He was soon admitted to the New York bar²⁰ and returned to the city in order to be with his father, who was suffering from frequent illnesses and needed his sup-

17. J. Munsell, *The Annals of Albany, New York*, 1869, Vol. I, p. 299, gives a list of sixty-six men who acquired their profession in Bleeker's office and "who have, by their talents and worth, risen to places of eminence and distinction."

18. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 109.

19. Rufus W. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

20. The exact date of Hoffman's admission to the bar is not available, for New York State does not now have such records prior to 1835; but Griswold (*op. cit.*, p. 259) says he was admitted at the age of twenty-one.

port. During his first year he kept his office very close to that of his father ²¹ in order to be of assistance to him and to receive in return the benefit of his legal knowledge and guidance as well as of his prestige.

21. *The New York City Directory for 1827-1828*, p. 255, gives the address of J. O. Hoffman as 3 Wall Street and Charles F. Hoffman as 4 Wall Street. This probably denotes merely another office in the same building, for the buildings were not numbered regularly as they now are.

CHAPTER III

FROM LAW TO LITERATURE

Charles Fenno Hoffman returned from Albany to New York in 1827 at the age of 21, having already been admitted to the bar. His father was now so unwell that he had to spend much of his time in bed; and the old Fenno family servant, Katy, who is often mentioned in the Hoffman letters and who seems to have enjoyed the love of all who knew her,¹ was his nurse. It would seem that this illness of Judge Hoffman should have meant more legal work for the son, especially as their offices were so close together, but this was evidently not the case. Hoffman had not studied long enough with his father to make acquaintances who would see that business was sent to him, and his lack of enthusiasm for the law was probably so noticeable that clients hesitated to entrust their cases to his inexperience.

1. Katy was very young when she entered the service of John Fenno and acted as nurse for his children, all of whom seem to have had a most affectionate regard for her. The only knowledge of her age was based upon her memory of the fact that she was a girl in her teens at the time of the Battle of Bunker Hill. After the death of Judge Hoffman, whom she had nursed faithfully for fifteen years, Katy was cared for by George and Julia, brother and sister of Charles Fenno. The feeling of the Hoffmans for this old servant, who is supposed to have been in the family for over eighty years, is shown in a letter from Charles Fenno Hoffman to his sister Julia (see below, pp. 217-18). Irving in a letter to Josiah Ogden Hoffman, once spoke of "Mammy Caty (who you know is at least one-half witch)." (P. M. Irving, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 249.)

There was, however, one class of visitors who were rather frequent and whom Hoffman seems to have met successfully. These visitors were creditors. During Judge Hoffman's illness his bills were piling up at a surprising rate, and it fell to the lot of Charles to deal with them. He wrote to his brother George about this time that he was becoming as "used to meeting and putting off creditors as 'eels are to skinning.'" ² The next year, however, his father enjoyed a temporary improvement in health, and when the legislature passed a bill for a new court for the city, Judge Hoffman was made Chief Justice.

This appointment gave Charles the opportunity of establishing his own law office. In spite of the fact that he was entertaining hopes of being appointed a "Bearer of Dispatches" to Europe,³ as he somewhat mysteriously says, he was so eager to accomplish something in his profession that he and Adam D. Logan equipped their law offices on Pine Street "in a very neat style and made them in every respect so comfortable," writes Hoffman,⁴ "that I'm afraid all the lawyers of our acquaintance will inflict themselves upon us."

Perhaps the lawyers of their acquaintance did inflict themselves upon them, but in spite of the attractiveness of the room the two young attorneys were not overrun with clients. During these years Hoffman made every effort to succeed at the bar, but the study of law was always distasteful to him. In a letter to his brother

2. See below, letter of December, 1829, pp. 202-3.

3. Charles Fenno Hoffman to George Hoffman, March 8, 1829. See below, p. 200.

4. Charles Fenno Hoffman to George Hoffman, May 6, 1828. See below, p. 193.

George, a young engineer in Pennsylvania, he admitted, as early as February, 1828, a strong dislike for legal study, but told of the efforts he was making to progress in his profession:

Pa dwells upon your present success and I've no doubt that when the idea of my professional ignorance and distaste for legal study is most annoying to him the thought of your cheering prospects amply consoles him. The fact is as regards myself that since I have first really felt the importance or rather absolute necessity of studying my profession "con amore" my health has been so variable that I could not apply myself. I have lately taken to study languages and am now engaged with French, Italian and Spanish with the intention of pursuing these for the next three months. By that time I may have acquired some habit of application and may be able to go on with law vigorously in the spring. I have begun school again not with the hope of becoming an "Admirable Chrichton" [sic] but to get what I can out of myself just as a judicious farmer when the soil is too light to be in a field of solid [sic] whereas he will console himself by getting a "smart" crop of clover from it. Wm. Duer is as poor a law student as myself. But enough of these matters. When I think of them it puts the thermometer of "Hyp" below zero, and I console myself with the idea that liver, conspt. [constipation?] or some of the dyspep family will stop my [?] before failure shall have pained those who are most dear to me.

As ever,

C. F. H.⁵

And then again, on December 4,⁶ he expressed his disappointment in himself to his brother: "Take care of yourself, my dear Hoffman. You and I have changed situations; thou art the ultima spes generis Hoffmani and I

5. See p. 193 below for beginning of this letter.

6. See below, p. 203, for this letter.

am not quite as desperate a concern as thou wert in Virginia."

During the long hours from nine o'clock in the morning till five o'clock in the afternoon, as he waited in his office for clients, Hoffman used to study and write, as he had done while under the tutelage of Harmanus Bleecker at Albany. His writing consisted principally of essays and poems. Here are some verses which were doubtless written by him during this period. They appeared in the *New-York American* of Tuesday, March 16, 1830,⁷ and are clearly in imitation of Byron although they are entirely lacking in Byron's egotism.⁸

[FOR THE AMERICAN]

RHYMES TO HIS MUSE—By an Attorney at Law.

'Tis dull to sit from nine till five o'clock,
 To watch for business as it chance to fall,
 With nought—except when duns remorseless knock,
 And on your speechless pockets vainly call—
 To break the waveless tide of deep ennui,
 That courses o'er the soul so sluggishly.

And when "the breeze and beam like thieves come in"
 To steal one's thoughts from musty books away—
 (A kind of larceny I deem not sin)
 They will those thoughts to thee my Muse convey:
 For thou hast been since first I erred in rhyme,
 Felonious receiver of my stolen time.

7. This poem does not appear in the collection of Charles Fenno Hoffman's poems made in 1873 by his nephew, Edward Fenno Hoffman.

8. While in the manner of Byron, these verses are in the same meter as Halleck's *Fanny*, a modified form of the ottava rima used by Byron in his *Beppo*.

But like the rest of thy dear sex, who never
My lavished homage did with smiles repay—
At least so seldom, I forget if ever
I've had one snug flirtation in my day—
Thou lady hast me of my soul beguiled,
Nor left one token that you ever smiled.

But who that e'er Love's witchery has known,
Can coldly look upon *one* radiant face,
Nor wish to call its heavenly smiles his own—
Its soul-hit features can with calmness trace,
Can hear *one* angel voice of thrilling tone,
Nor trembling own their spell whene'er alone?

And who that once in dear delicious rhyme
Hath murmur'd sentiment or vented spleen;
Or with its magic hath defrauded Time
Of some bright hours, the weary waste between,
When first we wake to life and living pain,
Till when in death's cold arms we sleep again?

Who that hath known the fascinating spell,
Thou, fairy Muse, canst round thy votary throw,
Would wish to break a charm he knows so well,
Can give the rainbow's hues to all below—
Can center raptures in one thrilling stanza
Worth all the power of Bourbon or Braganza?

Power! I've dreamt of thee! What boy has not?
Where beats the heart upon this curious ball
Doom'd in its sullen depths at last to rot,
That ne'er has leaped at Glory's clarion call—
That ne'er the restless burning wish has known,
To sway an empire or to *spurn* a throne?

But what proud mind—although ambition's weed
Will spring the rankest in the richest soil—
What manly mind, where jarring factions lead,
To despot Party would, subjected, toil,
A servile hireling, a wretched tool,
Where knave with knave, and fool competes with fool?

Alas! my country—must each patriot own
Thou needest not, prophetic bard, to sing—
That where Dissention's dragon teeth are sown,
Fell Discord's armed myrmidons will spring;
That even now, thy consecrated earth,
Hallowed by freemen's tread, is giving birth?

To slaves, who'd fire with Destruction's⁹ brand
The Union's fabric—that Ephesian fane
Where Sovereign States, majestic columns stand,
Upholding each in colossean chain,
One mighty structure, one stupendous dome,
Freedom's proud temple, Liberty's last home.

But, hold! this subject has been too well handled
By lusty Hayne, as Milo did a bull;
And Webster, who both bull and Milo dandled
Like babies in his arms, nor felt them full.
I'm sure, when I began, I never meant to
Touch upon this question, being one content to

Light Fancy's torch at Hillhouse' chasten'd fire,
From prurient Percival cull some flowrets yet,
Woo twilight strains from gentle Bryant's lyre,
Or with arch Halleck's piquant muse coquet—

9. The leading article of the *New-York American* for March 4, 1830, is on "The Value of the Union." "It will hardly be credited," says the writer of this article, perhaps Hoffman himself, "by the orderly, peaceful, industrious, and contented citizens in this portion of our common country, that in the capital of one of these States, a paper has recently been established of which the chief object seems to be to effect a separation of the Union. Yet such is the fact, and the *Southern Times*, printed at Columbia, South Carolina, which has only reached its sixth number, has already devoted a large space in three numbers to the lucubrations of a correspondent, under the signature of *Laelius*, whose only object is to prove the right and expediency of dissolving the Federal Compact, and the *inability* of the Northern States by reason of the 'timidity' of their inhabitants, and their 'want of military spirit,' to oppose any impediment to such a dissolution!" Hoffman gives over half a column of space to long extracts from these letters of *Laelius* appearing in the *American*.

Or else, of learning, thought, and wit, the pith
Steal from the pages of "a Mr. Smith."¹⁰

Although Hoffman devoted himself closely to business and was deeply concerned because he was disappointing the expectations of his relatives and friends, he could not overcome his aversion to the law. Had he won a few successes at first, he might have come to love it; but this did not happen, and his distaste grew. The realization of failure in the profession in which his father was so successful made Hoffman feel that he did not deserve to enjoy himself by being present at social functions, which he found so delightful. His natural amiability would not let him, however, in spite of his infirmity, withdraw from the social life of the town. Although he could not dance, he seems to have been in demand for his pleasing personal qualities and for his interest in card playing. In writing to his brother, he discussed his social activities:

I hope, Hoffman, that you have made up your mind and will eventually make up your body to become a great Beau. Believe me, it is necessary for one of us on sister's account to sacrifice himself for the good of the Republic and as I am *hors de combat* as regards balls, I shall claim as my prerogative an immunity from parties of every description. I have had two invitations already, one of them to Aunt Hoffmans I availed myself of. They took to dancing about 10 o'clock, as sensible people always do on that occasion when they find out how stupid they are "per se" and likely to become "inter se." I joined a party of married ladies and old gents at cards and rose from the table at 2 o'clock.¹¹

10. Author of a singularly wild and mysterious work, just published, called "Deluge—Canto I, containing six nice little chapters." (This is Hoffman's note.)

11. Charles Fenno Hoffman to George Hoffman, November, 1827. See p. 192 below.

During these early days in New York Hoffman was doubtless contributing anonymously to various newspapers and magazines, partly because he felt the urge to exercise his literary abilities, and partly because he needed the money he was able to earn in this manner. The need of money was serious, for he writes, after practicing law his first year, that he is still thinking

of going to starve in the country, it is decidedly more reputable than starving in town. If one has no money in the city his character soon becomes as threadbare as his coat and impecunosity [sic] is the worst crime a citizen can be convicted of.¹²

This anonymous contributing soon brought its reward, however, and he became closely associated on the *New-York American* with Charles King, later president of Columbia College. By September, 1829, when he was only twenty-three years of age, he assumed, during a temporary absence of King, the entire editorial charge of that paper.¹³

Hoffman's association with Charles King on the *American*¹⁴ marked an important turning point in his career. From this time forth he was the literary man instead of the lawyer. He had realized after three years of sitting

12. Charles Fenno Hoffman to George Hoffman, July 27, 1828. See p. 196 below.

13. Charles Fenno Hoffman to George Hoffman, September, 1829. See pp. 201-2 below.

14. Gulian C. Verplanck in a letter to Bryant in 1821 had described the *American* as "of extensive circulation, and of considerable importance in our State politics" (Parke Godwin, *A Biography of William Cullen Bryant*, 1883, Vol. I, pp. 178-79). This paper began as a semi-weekly on March 3, 1819, and was published daily and semiweekly from March 8, 1820, till February 15, 1845, when it was united with the *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer*. (*The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 1927, Vol. XXI, p. 11.)

in a law office that he would never be a lawyer, but he felt that he would be happy if he could indulge his literary inclinations. His legal work was drudgery; his work on the *American* was both pleasurable and invigorating.

Hoffman was especially fortunate in being associated in his first real literary venture with the *American* and with King, who in 1813 had already been a member of the New York Legislature and who, although earnestly opposed to the war with England, had enlisted as a volunteer in 1814 and served until the cessation of hostilities. He was the second son of Rufus King, the statesman, and he stood very high among the leading men of New York. In conducting his paper, King was very careful to depart from the current practice of publishing offensive personals and bitter, partisan editorials, although he was accused by *The New-York Mirror* of failing sometimes to give credit for articles copied from other papers.¹⁵ He also established a literary and review department, and it was in this section of the paper that Hoffman was given an opportunity for exercising his critical skill.¹⁶

Hoffman's *American* contributions, which proved to be very popular, gave him the opportunity of enjoying a bit of mystification. He signed the articles either with an asterisk or the initial "H" and the "communications" with another of his initials. Indulging himself in his love of

15. *The New-York Mirror*, Vol. XIV, p. 312 (March 25, 1837).

16. King continued the editing of this paper until 1847, when it was merged with the *Courier and Enquirer*, which he edited for another year before retiring to private life. In the following year, 1849, he was chosen as the seventh president of Columbia College, whose affairs he ably conducted until his death in 1864. Hoffman always spoke very highly of King, and the friendship seems to have continued for many years.

puns, he wrote his brother: "when you read the articles marked by an asterisk in the *American* you may know that I commune with you as lovers have done for some thousand years—through a star."¹⁷ By April, 1830, he has "become completely Americanized, having now been with the establishment long enough to feel quite 'nateral like.'" ¹⁸

Although he was still identified with the legal profession, he seems to have been occupied in his own private office at the *American* in reviewing novels and papers, work which he "perfectly reveled in." For several years, however, Hoffman refused to sign his name to any of his articles, feeling, as he wrote John B. Van Schaick, that he was not writing anything that would do him credit before the public.¹⁹ He even went so far as to say, "My notions on this subject may be peculiar but much as I admire the Sketches of your friend Willis and would like

17. Charles Fenno Hoffman to George Hoffman, September, 1829. See below, p. 202.

18. Charles Fenno Hoffman to George Hoffman, April 21, 1830. See below, p. 204.

19. He was not, however, above writing a criticism of one of his own works which had been published anonymously, *The Thaw King's Visit to New York*. In reviewing this in the *New-York American* April 16, 1831, p. 2, cols. 3-5, Hoffman says, "Our editorial table presents so meager an appearance today, that for the want of more solid materials for our weekly review, we are obliged to have recourse to a queer, dapper-looking little volume under this title; with which, from our not having seen it elsewhere, we are inclined to think we have been especially favored; and indeed between the reader, ourselves and the printer's devil, shrewdly suspect of being a lure to draw us from some grave matter that rightfully ought to come under our editorial inquisition the while." He speaks only fairly well of this poem and certainly gives it no elaborate praise. He includes in his review of the poem one stanza which he later removed to use as the first stanza of "Love's Calendar."

to be the author of them incog. I would not for \$500 have my name attached as author to the publication.”²⁰ Even as late as February, 1838, Hoffman expressed this attitude in an article on copyright in *The American Monthly*:

Under the encouragement of letters by the new law, a man of cultivated mind would think it no discredit to be an author, but might employ himself in training the intellect of the country, leading it onward to something more vigorous than it has yet attained. Some of our best writers are those who are employed in the different professions or in mercantile life, who have given evidence of their powers by incidental efforts: . . . The rewards of Fame are tempting, but it is purchasing the insecure good too dearly to pay for the loss of fortune, and professional reputation during life.²¹

After three years of contributing to the *American*, Hoffman found his literary reputation was well established, even though he was still a very young man; and when Washington Irving returned to America in 1832, Hoffman was one of the men who had the honor of signing the formal address asking the famous author to set aside a day for a complimentary dinner.²² The letter, which is dated two days after Irving's arrival, is as follows:

New York, May 23, 1832.

Washington Irving, Esq.

Sir: A number of your townsmen, many of them the associates of your youth, impatient to evince to you their feelings of gratification at your return among them—to express the interest they

20. Charles F. Hoffman to John B. Van Schaick, September 16, 1828. See below, p. 197.

21. Vol. V, N.S., p. 109-110.

22. Hoffman was also one of the committee for the Dramatic Festival in honor of William Dunlap, February 28, 1833 (*New-York American*, January 22, p. 2, col. 5).

have felt in your career in every period of its increasing brilliancy—to pay a just tribute to private worth, and to give you a warm and cordial welcome to your native city, beg that you will appoint some day when you will honor them with your company at a public dinner.

We are, with great regard
Your friends and servants,²³

Professor James Renwick of Columbia College was the first signer. John Duer, the jurist, who later became the chief justice of the superior court of New York; Chancellor James Kent, who was at this time engaged in writing his law treatises; Hoffman's employer, Charles King; J. A. King, later governor of New York; John W. Francis, an authority in medicine and a brilliant conversationalist; Philip Hone, the diarist; Hoffman's lawyer brother, Ogden Hoffman; and about thirty others prominent in city and state added their names.

Numerous other persons of importance were present at this dinner. Among them were his Excellency, General Santander, President of the Republic of New Granada; the "Venerable Mr. Gallatin," Secretary of the Treasury of the United States; General Scott of the United States Army; Commander Chauncey of the United States Navy; and Hoffman's father, Josiah Ogden Hoffman. The principal address, given by Chancellor Kent, was followed by toasts and short addresses.²⁴

Although Hoffman's father, Josiah Ogden Hoffman, and his brother, Ogden Hoffman, were both honored by requests for toasts, Hoffman was not so favored. This

23. *The New-York Evening Post*, Saturday, June 2, p. 2, col. 1.

24. A full account of the toasts is to be found in *The New-York Evening Post*, June 2, 1832.

seems surprising perhaps in view of the fact that Hoffman had responded to two toasts at a similar dinner given to Gulian C. Verplanck on his return to New York after the passage of the national copyright law.²⁵ A "greater amount and variety of talent probably never met together on any similar occasion in this city"²⁶ than was present at the dinner for Verplanck, where international copyright had been considered not only as the next citadel to be captured in the advance against literary pirates, but also as an added source of understanding and friendship between nations. The speeches all tended toward this sentiment, and the toast, "an international copyright law, the only link required to complete the chain of reciprocity between nations," was typical of the spirit of the meeting. Hoffman probably received at this dinner the first impetus for his interest in international copyright, a subject which inspired several later articles from his pen. One of his toasts, "The Republic of Letters—The *Common Wealth* of the World," clearly showed this sentiment; and the other, "Alexander Slidell, the author of *A Year in Spain*—his pen has freshened up the colors and

25. The letter inviting Mr. Verplanck to a dinner in his honor, signed by Bryant, Halleck, Hoffman, Dunlap, Paulding, Inman, Sands, James Kent, Charles King, Ogden Hoffman, J. W. Francis, William Leggett, and others, gave Verplanck high praise for his work on copyright: "The friends of literature and the arts, in all parts of the Union, have witnessed with interest your able and persevering exertions in the Congress of the United States to place literary property on a secure and permanent footing. They have had the satisfaction to see those exertions at length successful; and the new copy-right law, framed according to your suggestions, is justly regarded as a measure highly beneficial, not only to the classes immediately interested, but, indirectly, to the whole community." (*The New-York Evening Post*, April 30, 1831, p. 2, col. 1.)

26. *Ibid.*, April 30, 1831.

quicken into new life the creations of Le Sage and Cervantes," reflected his personal interest in two authors who were widely read in the United States and one of whom may have influenced Hoffman's own later fiction.²⁷

Hoffman was also one of a group inviting Bryant to a similar dinner after his return from abroad in 1836,²⁸ a dinner which Bryant, however, declined because he felt that he was undeserving of such consideration, especially in view of the fact that he had produced nothing of worth during his absence.

But there were soon other matters of more serious literary interest to engage Hoffman's attention. In September, 1832, the Messrs. Peabody conceived the idea of establishing a monthly literary magazine. Like all magazine undertakings of that quarter century, this was rather precarious and needed a strong man with an established literary reputation at its helm. It is especially surprising, under these circumstances, to find the publishers selecting as the editor a youth of twenty-six years with no magazine experience. Hoffman, however, was their choice. His work on the *American* had evidently been recognized as of a very high order. *The New-York Evening Post*, which publishes the prospectus of the new magazine, has an editorial on its establishment. After commenting upon the pains which Peabody and Company plan to take in its make-up and its general excellence, the *Post* praises their judgment in the selection of an editor:

if it is true they have engaged the individual named in a morning paper, as editor of their projected Monthly, not a doubt can be

27. *Ibid.* For the possible influence of Le Sage on Hoffman's *Vanderlyn* see p. 72 below.

28. *The New-Yorker*, Vol. 1, p. 61 (April 16, 1836).

entertained that it will be conducted in a manner creditable to our city and to our national literature, and that it will deserve and receive a very enviable amount of patronage. The gentleman alluded to, Mr. Charles F. Hoffman, though not known by name as extensively as some writers of infinitely less talent, has yet been much and justly admired through the medium of his sprightly and elegant effusions, both in prose and verse; and the readers of his productions will be glad to see him exercising his mind in a broader and better field than the columns of a daily political newspaper.

Since the above was in type, we have learned from an authentic source that the new magazine will be conducted by Mr. Hoffman. The publishers could scarcely have a surer guarantee of success than is furnished them in the talents and tastes of this gentleman.²⁹

Magazine work was quite different from his task as literary reviewer on the *American*, for it gave him an opportunity to call on the pens of other authors whose acquaintance he had made during his years in New York. It also required good business management, which in the first instance meant the securing of a subscription list. Hoffman set to work enthusiastically and soon had eight hundred names.³⁰

The next responsibility was to secure contributions from writers who were well enough known to give the monthly prestige. During his brief editorship Hoffman was fortunate enough to secure the aid of such men as James K. Paulding and William Cullen Bryant. Bryant's biographer is authority for the statement that Robert C. Sands was writing an article on "Esquimaux Literature" for *The Knickerbocker* when, as his pencil traced the line,

29. October 13, 1832, p. 2, col. 2.

30. *The Diary of Philip Hone*, ed. by Allan Nevins, 1927, Vol. I, p. 86.

“Oh, deem not my spirit among you abides,”

he was smitten by a paralysis of which he died.³¹ Mr. Bryant's “Arctic Lover to his Mistress” was intended to form part of this essay, but in the absence of the article itself, the poem was printed alone. The first part of the essay completed by Sands, together with a memoir of his life, appeared in the first number of *The Knickerbacker*.

The first issue of this magazine, destined to become one of the most important media of literary talent in the country for the next twenty-five years, appeared on January 1, 1833, under the name of *The Knickerbacker*. This number, which contained a clever article by Hoffman, introducing the magazine to the public, was imposing enough for a new publication. The order and arrangement, the contributions, the type and the paper, were all worthy of attention. The magazine did not receive unanimous approval, however, and even Philip Hone, who admitted his partiality to Hoffman, said that he was disappointed in the first number but thought from the list of contributors that the succeeding ones would no doubt be better.³²

During the three months while he was organizing, and during the three following months while he was conducting, this magazine, Hoffman still kept his connection with the *American* and made several contributions, his “Weekly Review” still maintaining its high standard. But overwork and a heavy diet were too vitiating for even

31. Parke Godwin, *A Biography of William Cullen Bryant*, 1883, Vol. I, p. 289.

32. *The Diary of Philip Hone*, ed. by Bayard Tuckerman, 1889, Vol. I, p. 71.

his robust constitution, and it is not surprising that a breakdown followed. There may be some significance in the fact that as early as the latter part of 1832 he wrote from Buttermilk Falls, where he was temporarily boarding with a widow's family: "the table is of the simplest—pork and rice and rice and pork forming the varieties."³³ At any rate, Hoffman became a victim of dyspepsia, from which he was soon to seek relief in travel.

This latter trouble, apparently so common in the America of a hundred years ago, made it impossible for him to carry on his duties with both the *American* and *The Knickerbacker*; and he accordingly turned over the magazine to Timothy Flint, who, much to Hoffman's regret, changed the name from *Knickerbacker* to *Knickerbocker*.³⁴ Hoffman preferred *Knickerbacker* because it was the original Dutch spelling, and not merely because of a personal whim.³⁵ Timothy Flint sold the magazine to Lewis Gaylord Clark, who conducted it successfully for nearly a quarter of a century.

In spite of his dyspepsia, however, Hoffman still continued his work on the *American* with as much success as formerly. Then, one day it occurred to him that he had read in a medical journal an article in which the great

33. Charles Fenno to George Hoffman, August, 1832. See below, p. 208.

34. The *New-York American*, October 5, 1833, p. 2, col. 1.

35. The prospectus of this magazine as advertised in *The Evening Post*, October 13, 1832, announces the name as *The Knickerbocker*, but the first issue appearing in January, 1833, bears the name of *The Knickerbacker*. Although Hoffman was disappointed that the original Dutch spelling was not followed, he himself in his later writings (*Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie*, Vol. I, p. 4) uses "Knickerbockers" instead of "Knickerbackers" in referring to the early inhabitants of Manhattan Island.

Dr. Cullen's name was given as authority for the notion that horseback riding was a specific in consumption and dyspepsia.³⁶ Hoffman accordingly decided to indulge in his two favorite sports of riding and hunting, and to make a tour of the West in the hope that he might return cured of his malady. Dyspepsia and overwork may not have been the only causes directly leading to this trip. Perhaps a disappointment in love also had something to do with this decision, for in later years in "A Night on the Enchanted Mountains," he told in a realistic vein of a dream in which he saw:

One around whose name, when life was new, the whole tissue of my hopes and fears was woven—for whom all my aspirations after worldly honours had been breathed—in whom all my dreams of earthly happiness had been wound up. She had mingled in purer hours with all the fond and home-loving fancies of boyhood; she had been the queen of each romantic vision of my youth; and, amid the worldly cares and selfish struggles of maturer life, the thought of her had lived separate and apart in my bosom, with no companion in its hallowed chamber save the religion learned at a mother's knee—save that hope of better things which, once implanted by a mother's love, survives amid the storms and conflicts of the world. . . .

I had loved her, and I had lost her; how, it matters not.³⁷

And then again after his dream was over and he tried to account for this vision he could not understand why it should have been so interwoven with the memory of an

36. Charles Fenno Hoffman to George Hoffman, March 10, 1830. See below, p. 203. In the letter written from Marshall, Calhoun County, Michigan Territory, in December, 1833, *A Winter in the West*, Vol. I, p. 191, Hoffman says: "I have met with several dispeptics who have been completely cured of that horrible disease by their change of life."

37. *Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie*, London, 1839, Vol. II, p. 245.

idle caprice of boyhood "as to give new shape and reality to a phantom long-long since faded." Perhaps this too had something to do with the trip to the "Far West."³⁸

He was able to provide funds for this trip largely through the arrangement he made with King. The plan was that Hoffman was to take his trip through the West and write, as opportunity offered, letters describing his journey. The compensation for these letters is not known, but it is scarcely probable that the *American* was to defray Hoffman's whole expenses. On his return trip he writes from Charlottesville, Virginia: "I have now but \$10 in my pocket and unless I can sell my horse I must try and negotiate a draft on the *American* tomorrow."³⁹ This reluctance to negotiate a draft would seem to indicate that he had already used up his allowance from King.

Whether it was the dyspepsia, the love affair, the desire for adventure, or some other cause that sent him off to brave the rigors of winter in an almost unknown country we cannot know, but off he started in the fall of 1833; and as a result, the travel literature of the United States is richer by two volumes of vivid description and interesting narrative.

38. There is too the bare possibility that "Love's Calendar" with its story of unrequited love may have been inspired by personal experience.

39. Charles Fenno Hoffman to George Hoffman, May 23, 1834. See below, p. 55.

CHAPTER IV

A WINTER IN THE WEST

The West of 1830 began at the Allegheny Mountains. The inhabitants of the entire nation numbered only about thirteen millions, and most of these were, of course, in the long-established sections along the seacoast, although ten years later the Middle Western states and territories contained over four millions of people, nearly one-fourth the population of the entire United States. When Hoffman started on his trip in 1833 the population of Western Virginia and Kentucky ranged from only two to eighteen inhabitants to the square mile, although the settlers of Ohio numbered now nearly a million and surpassed the combined population of Massachusetts and Connecticut.¹ The backwoodsmen of these frontier states were men who bore the marks of continual struggle against the elements. Dirt and squalor were evident in their cabins and they were men of little education and refinement. These first settlers cannot be called farmers, for as soon as they had brought a little patch of ground into farming condition, they commonly sold out to the next comers and moved away into the wilderness. Most of them loved solitude, and the smell of the smoke of a neighbor's chimney was in itself enough to drive them farther into the wilderness. Their farms consisted of a few acres of land, part of it cultivated, and part used for pasturing, cows, pigs, and

1. Frederick Jackson Turner, *Rise of the New West*, 1907, pp. 76-83.

chickens.² It was into this West, where few dared to go unaccompanied that Hoffman started alone on horseback in the fall of 1833.

His first letter was written from Easton, Pennsylvania, on October 17; the situation of this village he deemed "eminently happy—almost picturesque—and the country around it delightful." He was much impressed by Lafayette College, situated in a commanding position over the Bushkill, and facing one of the principal streets.³

From Easton he passed through Rodrocksville to Harrisburg, the capital of the state, which had much in its appearance "to reconcile the most captious to its assumption of civic honors."⁴ He departed from Harrisburg in the rain, hastened through Bedford and Somerset, which had recently been almost destroyed by fire, and arrived at Wheeling, Virginia, on the twenty-ninth of October.⁵ In all of his letters he dwelt upon the beauty of the mountains, rivers and other objects of nature. He noticed the frosty branches glittering in the sun; the green, gold, purple, scarlet, saffron, and vermilion leaves; the sudden breaks and turns of the mountain road; and numberless objects which the untrained observer would not have seen and which one with less buoyancy of spirit could not have appreciated:

The clear pure atmosphere one breathes, with the motion of a spirited horse, would "create a soul beneath the ribs of death," and rejuvenate Methusalah himself. One must once have been a

2. Edward Channing, *A History of the United States*, 1924, Vol. V, p. 43.

3. *New-York American*, October 26, 1833, p. 2, cols. 1-2.

4. *Ibid.*, November 9, 1833, p. 2, col. 3.

5. *Ibid.*, November 23, 1833, p. 2, cols. 4-5.

dyspeptic to estimate to the full that feeling of tangible health. For my own part, however philosophers may preach up the sublimity of intellectual pleasures, or poets dilate upon the delights of etherealizing sentiment, I confess that I hold one good burst of pure animal spirits far above them all. On horseback, especially when life quickens in every vein, when there is life in the breeze that plays upon your cheek, and life in each bound of the noble creature beneath you, who that has felt his pulses gladden, and youth, glorious indomitable youth, swelling high above manhood's colder tide in his bosom—who would give the rush of spirits, the breathing poetry of that moment, for all the lays that lyrist ever sung—for all the joys philosophy e'er proved. This I know must appear a shocking doctrine to "the march of mind" people; but as they are presumed to go on foot, they are no authority on the subject.⁶

Upon his arrival at Pittsburgh, Hoffman passed a pleasant week with friends, and after visiting Braddock's Field wrote home a long letter on the massacre of the English General's men at the hands of the French and Indians, after Braddock had refused to listen to the advice of the "Virginia Buckskin." Hoffman handled this narrative after the manner of the historian and gave quotations from *A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Colonel James Smith*,⁷ and from the speech of an Indian chief before the council of Pennsylvania, preserved among the state records at Harrisburg.

But we cannot follow Hoffman through all of his experiences on this journey. From Pittsburgh he passed

6. *Ibid.*, November 23, 1833, p. 2, col. 4.

7. The exact title of this book is *An Account of the Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Colonel James Smith, during his captivity with the Indians in the years 1755-1759, 1799*. Written by himself in 1799.

through Cleveland, Detroit, part of Indiana, Chicago,⁸ Prairie du Chien, and "Ouisconsin Territory"; finally, early in March he reached St. Louis, which was destined to be the western limit of his journey. Here he waited some time in the hope of being able to proceed to the mouth of the Yellowstone in company with one of the American Fur Company's parties, but he was not successful in his application for passage because some of the members of the party did not want "a chiel amang them takin notes."⁹

Many and interesting, even exciting and dangerous, were his adventures. In Chicago the weather was so cold on the tenth of January that he was unable to keep the ink from freezing while he was using it:

It has been so cold, indeed, as almost to render writing impracticable in a place so comfortless. The houses were built with such rapidity, during the summer, as to be mere shells; and the thermometer having ranged as low as 28 below zero, during several days it has been almost impossible, notwithstanding the large fires kept up by an attentive landlord, to prevent the ink from freezing while using it, and one's fingers become so numb in a very few moments when thus exercised, that, after vainly trying to write in gloves, I have thrown by my pen, and joined the group, composed of all the household, around the bar-room fire. . . .

The town lies upon a dead level, along the banks of a narrow forked river, and is spread over a wide extent of surface to the shores of the lake, while vessels of considerable draught of water can, by means of the river, unload in the center of the place. I believe I have already mentioned that four-fifths of the population have come in since last spring: the erection of new buildings during

8. *Fergus Historical Series*, No. 20, 1882, reprinted Hoffman's letters descriptive of Chicago and vicinity.

9. *A Winter in the West*, 1835, Vol. II, p. 113. This letter does not appear in the *American*.

the summer has been in the same proportion; and although a place of such mushroom growth can, of course, boast of but little solid improvement in the way of building, yet contracts have been made for the ensuing season which must soon give Chicago much of that metropolitan appearance it is destined so promptly to assume. As a place of business, its situation at the central head of the Mississippi Valley will make it the New-Orleans of the north; and its easy and close intercourse with the most flourishing eastern cities will give it the advantage, as its capital increases, of all their improvements in the mode of living.¹⁰

Near Boyd's Grove, Illinois, his saddle horse fell, rolled over him, and slid down a steep embankment. Hoffman was himself saved from this dangerous slide only by being caught on a jutting rock.¹¹ He was little more fortunate in riding behind a team, for shortly afterwards when he was crossing a frozen creek in a sled, his horses fell through and were soon coated with ice. Had the cold proved fatal to the team, Hoffman and his guide might have perished ten miles from any habitation. But the most annoying incident of all was the loss of his mount after he had been suddenly unseated:

I rode thus for miles without seeing a living thing except a raven which, as that description of bird is only found in those parts of the Union where wolves still infest the country, I at once took it for granted was hovering near one of the savage beasts to which he so faithfully plays the jackal. Wheeling my horse suddenly from the trail towards a thicket of dwarf oaks, where I expected to find the carrion deer that attracts these worthies, he shied from the bush, and I was thrown upon the spot. After extricating the foot, by which I was dragged a yard or two, from the stirrup, I sprang up but little hurt, and moved as quickly as possible to catch my horse, who, having paused for an instant in a clump of trees

10. *Ibid.*; Vol. I, pp. 242-44.

11. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 275.

near by, turned his head round, like a pointer taken aback with the scent after he has passed a bush, and stood calmly gazing at me. At the first step towards the rascal, however, he moved nearly a rod sideways, and then, ducking his head towards the ground, and throwing his heels high in the air, my ungrateful courser, accompanying these motions with every additional mark of disrespect he could summon to his aid, left his master alone in the wilderness. He disappeared behind a hill in a moment. I could not help ejaculating, with the Kentuckian whose house and family had been burned up by the savages, while he was cleaning his rifle at a brook hard by—"This is very *ridiculous*." No time was to be lost, however. It was late in the day, and I was far from any house; while the occasional flakes of snow which began to fall from the black lowering sky, threatened a storm which might cover in a moment the only path that could guide me homeward. I sat down at once among the long dry grass, and stripping off my leggings, and disembarassing my heels of the now useless spurs, stowed all away in my coat-pockets. The coat itself I rolled up in a bundle around my left arm, and taking my gun, to which I applied a fresh cap, in my right, I strode off in as good a humour as one could summon under such provoking circumstances. I could not help thinking, indeed, how much worse matters might have been had I been thus deserted in one of the broad prairies, thirty miles, perhaps, from any house. As for the loss of my horse, I felt so indignant against the inconsiderate brute, that, I confess, it did not much trouble me. Thus did I trudge on, growing momentarily in better humour with myself. The scene around was dreary at present; but having had all the wild flowers that grow in Michigan described to me, I exercised my imagination by conceiving the more attractive appearance it must wear in summer. . . .

I must have practised horticulture in this way for some time when, on rising a slight eminence in my path, I saw my amiable roan standing quietly looking in the direction whence I was coming, apparently waiting for me. I was completely mollified. I forgave him the little freak, and advanced with a light heart to lay my hand upon the bridle. He moved a little, and so did I. He moved a little more, and I stood still. I spoke to him, but he continued

moving. I coaxed him, in a tone that would have melted the heart of one of the marble horses of St. Mark's;¹² he was moved by it—only farther from me. I whistled to him—(I had taught him a day or two before to come to my whistle, when he had obeyed me like a dog)—he stopped, and I advanced once more to lay my hand on the saddle, and the scoundrel broke into a trot just as I was about touching him. I brought my piece to my shoulder, and could hardly forbear drawing the trigger upon him as I stood.

The ground now rolled like the waves of a frozen sea, and my nefarious brute, who soon began to stalk leisurely along about a hundred yards ahead of me, would, to carry out the figure, be just topping the combing while I was in the trough, and vice versa—like two children balancing on a plank. It was perfectly insufferable, mile after mile, to see that eternal saddle bobbing up and down a hundred yards ahead of me. Sometimes, indeed, the vexatious wearer would step aside among a cluster of oaks, to nip the tender grass which still lingered around their roots; and then, as he would arch his neck, and, seeming to admire the Indian blanket and flame-coloured surcingle which, after the gay taste of the West, I had buckled, combining use with ornament, to the back of the ungrateful brute, dash off with a snort into a patch of prairie-land, I could not but admire the eye of fire and gracefully-gathering limbs of the spirited creature. I wished, however, that he was anybody's horse but mine, disporting himself at that rate. At last, at a turning of the path he disappeared behind a hill, and ceasing longer to tantalize, left me comparatively comfortable. I reached the first "clearing" about twenty minutes afterward, and looking along the highway which here commenced, my horse was nowhere to be seen. Tired alike with walking and vexation, and parched with thirst (I had neither eaten nor drunk since breakfast, and it was now nightfall), I advanced to the only shantee near, and knocked at the door. There was no answer, and I shook it violently. A rush-bottomed chair rattled, and a cat, the solitary occupant, sprang out through a broken window. I soon found my way, however, to the dilapidated trunk of a large sycamore-tree

12. These horses are gilded bronze instead of marble.

near, which formed the top of a well, and drawing up a moss-covered bucket, I placed my lips to the rusty iron-bound brim and took a draught, to which the most delicious of Lynch's chateau were but vile *vin-du-pays* in comparison. I can remember but one drink in my life before to compare with it, and that was from a similar goblet, after other lips than mine had hallowed the brim. A few moments after a lad rode into the yard with the object of my pursuit, whose bridle had been broken to pieces in the effort of several men to catch him a mile or two off. I was mounted in a moment, and regained my lodgings in an hour; when I found that the adventure of the day had not impaired my relish for a supper of fresh pike and white-fish, just smoking on the table.¹³

When Hoffman said in his introduction to *A Winter in the West* that "several of these letters" had already been published in the *New-York American*, he was understating the fact. Of the fifty letters in the two volumes, the first twenty-eight appeared in the paper in regular order within thirty weeks, the two weeks in which no letters appeared being those when Hoffman was so far away that the mail probably did not arrive. Although the letters were written regularly, the mail service was so poor that they were often as much as three months late in publication. Meanwhile these letters were having a very popular reception in New York; and the issue of the *New-York American* for June 14, 1834, which published the thirty-third letter, stated that this would be the last, as publication in book form had been determined upon and the remaining letters were being preserved for the complete edition. But in spite of this announcement the editors could not resist adding another letter—that of April 12—from the "Forks of the Kentucky," published

13. *A Winter in the West*, 1835, Vol. I, pp. 168-74.

in the *American* on July 26, over three months after it had been written, and perhaps even after Hoffman had returned to New York.

Hoffman's health had improved wonderfully, in spite of all his hardships, until the last of May, when he was nearing Charlottesville. From this place he wrote his brother, May 28, telling of his latest difficulties:

I have now but \$10 in my pocket and unless I can sell my horse I must try and negotiate a draft on the *American* tomorrow. It will kill me to sell Buckeye—he has carried me a thousand miles, scarcely showing it in his flesh, and he loves me like a dog. I caught the scarlet fever soon after coming through the Cumberland Gap and though I had it not severely yet the disease hung around me like a buck's skin. I had some most alarming symptoms of an inflammation of the brain as a young physician with whom I fell in company informed me. The doctors told me to keep still but it is my opinion that I escaped some severe and dangerous attack of illness by keeping my saddle and dragging along from three to thirty miles a day as my strength would let me. I felt tolerably well when I rode out but could scarcely sustain myself when I stopped, and was utterly unable to write my *American* letters, the two last of which you may have observed were very flat.¹⁴

Hoffman soon recovered from this indisposition and was able to write his last letter from Charlottesville on June 2. Before returning to New York he almost certainly stopped to visit Miss Rebecca Gratz,¹⁵ a warm friend of the Hoffman family.

14. Charles Fenno Hoffman to George Hoffman, May 28, 1834; manuscript in possession of E. F. Hoffman.

15. Miss Gratz is said to have been Scott's model for Rebecca in *Ivanhoe*. During one of the conversations between Irving and Scott, according to Gratz Van Rensselaer in *The Century Magazine*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 679-82 (1882), the former spoke of the wonderful beauty

After about eight months of travel Hoffman returned to New York with a large amount of literary experience for a young man of twenty-eight, a wide knowledge of human nature gained at first-hand, and a reputation of some consequence. The New York to which he returned welcomed him with high hopes for his future in literature. His letters had shown that he was trained in observation, that he had deep capacity for experiencing and expressing strong feeling and emotion, and that he had a breadth of view which enabled him to judge things in respect to their immediate environment as well as in comparison with similar things in another section of the country. Furthermore, he had been able to discriminate in his selections so that he chose scenes and incidents

and loveliness of character of Miss Gratz. He especially emphasized her adherence to her religious faith and told Scott that it alone had prevented her marriage to a Christian for whom she entertained a great love. Van Rensselaer says: "Scott finished the book in December, 1819, and immediately sent the first copy to Irving. In the letter accompanying it he asked: 'How do you like your Rebecca? Does the Rebecca I have pictured compare well with the pattern given?'" This letter, however, does not appear among either Scott's or Irving's letters. Mr. Joseph Jacobs in an article on "The Original of Scott's Rebecca" in *Publications of the American-Jewish Historical Society*, 1914, No. 22, pp. 53-60, says that the letter probably does not exist as Scott was still keeping secret his authorship of the Waverley novels and certainly would not thus have acknowledged it over his signature. Mr. Jacobs maintains that Major Mordecai (*Jewish Record* of Philadelphia, April 6, 1877, Vol. 2, No. 52, p. 3) may be correct in stating that "Scott wrote or sent a message" to Irving and that probably Irving did receive a copy of *Ivanhoe* with this message. Jacobs concludes by saying: "The identity of name, of traits of character and of incidents in the careers of the two Rebeccas, is so strikingly close that it would be against the canons of probability that there was no connection between them. . . . Careful inquiry has enabled us to confirm, in its main outline, the long cherished tradition that Rebecca Gratz, one of the noblest specimens of the Jewish woman that this Continent has displayed, was the original of Scott's most popular and attractive heroine."

which were not merely novel but also characteristic of a particular section of the country. Since his friends at once realized that his letters possessed the qualities needed for a successful book of travel, and gave him every encouragement in collecting them for appearance in book form, Hoffman soon set himself to the task of editing them for final publication.

CHAPTER V

THE WANDERER TURNS EDITOR

When Hoffman returned in 1834 from his winter in the West, New York was a hustling and energetic city. Hanover Square near the Battery was the "Rialto," and practically the whole town lay below Canal Street, a mile and a half from the southern end of the island. Anything north of that was the country with its poor roads, which led either to the few suburban places of the wealthy or to the well-known taverns. Although there were many 'busses and coaches, the streets were far less crowded than they were even ten years later, for the growth of New York was a steady, yearly progress. There were at this time neither bicycles nor street cars. The architecture was more uniform and far more simple than in the New York of even fifteen years later; squat and irregular wooden residences and low, solid brick houses were the reigning style, although there were also handsome buildings such as the Masonic Hall in Pearl Street, with its chamber in imitation of the Chapel of Henry VIII;¹ the Apollo Dancing Rooms; the Old Bowery Theatre; and the various churches to give it variety. The population was about 250,000.²

Literary New York in 1834 was composed of a busy, energetic, talented group of men, of which regiment, as

1. Hemstreet, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

2. Samuel Osgood, *New York in the Nineteenth Century*, 1902, p. 66.

one critic has said, James Fenimore Cooper was the colonel; Washington Irving, the lieutenant colonel; William Cullen Bryant, the major; and Richard Henry Dana and Fitz-Greene Halleck the captains.³

Cooper had already written many of his popular novels as well as some less popular works such as *Notions of the Americans* and *The Heidenmauer*. His sharp criticism of American manners and his impatience with the New York provinciality were beginning to involve him in long and unhappy controversies. The Bread and Cheese Club, which he had organized, was not so flourishing as it had been when it gave him a farewell dinner at the City Hotel in 1826 on his departure for England.

Bryant had been in the city for nine years and was now well launched on his journalistic career and had long since given up his plans for the law. He was beginning to enjoy his editorial work and did not now feel as he did when he wrote to Richard Henry Dana upon assuming his duties: "I do not like politics any better than you do; but they get only my mornings and you know politics and a bellyful are better than poetry and starvation." Fortunately, Bryant was able to find time for both poetry and politics, and by his untiring efforts in these two fields was able to reap the double reward of poet and journalist.

Irving had returned from his long period of productivity abroad and had been received with loud acclaim by a proud public. At the very time of Hoffman's arrival in the city Irving was himself preparing to set off on a Western tour, an account of which he was to present in *A Tour on the Prairies*. His best literary work was now

3. H. W. Mabie, *The Writers of Knickerbocker New York*, 1912, p. 95.

finished. He was yet to write his biography of *Oliver Goldsmith*, *Astoria*, *The Life of George Washington*, and miscellaneous books, but these merely enhanced the reputation which he had already won as a man of letters and of the world.

Halleck had been whole-heartedly adopted as a Knickerbocker after the publication of "Croaker & Co." in *The New-York Evening Post* of 1819. He had resigned his position in the counting house of Jacob Barker and was now in the employ of John Jacob Astor. His contributions were very meager, but what he did write was loudly acclaimed and gladly received. Seldom has a writer produced so little and held his reputation as a poet.

In 1834 *The New-York Mirror* had been established for eleven years, and just at this time Nathaniel Parker Willis had been sent abroad by George P. Morris. He was given a small viaticum of five hundred dollars and letters of introduction to important European personages, and in return he was to send back communications to the magazine at ten dollars the letter.⁴ He met and talked to celebrities everywhere, and in his fluent, witty and polished style wrote his letters home to the magazine. Willis and Hoffman were very good friends, almost of the same age, interested in the same things and even living in the same house for a while. Hoffman, in urging his brother George at New Brunswick, New Jersey, to pay the family a visit, wrote (January 10, 1830) of Willis's room:

If all our other rooms were occupied there is a snug unoccupied room with a fireplace in it in the garrett—Willis the poet has his

4. Henry A. Beers, *Nathaniel Parker Willis*, 1893, p. 104.

study in this part of the house from preference—a box of some ten feet square, as he described it to me, papered and hung with a few choice books, a bust, a print or two, a light table, and small cabinet with two chairs besides his arm chair—being its only furniture. Here he is far from the haunts of men and unmolested by chambermaids or visitants and may conjure up the wit of the *attics* in quiet—not a bad idea for a student to get as near Heaven as possible in his contemplations.⁵

Hoffman's uncle, Gulian C. Verplanck, a Congressman and a scholar, was writing articles and making addresses which had real literary merit, even though most of his work was dictated from a comfortable seat in Robert Sands's library. In this country he was already regarded as an authority on Shakespeare, although his edition of that poet did not appear till 1847.

New York boasted also two well-known song writers, George P. Morris and John Howard Payne. Morris, four years Hoffman's senior, was not only a writer of songs but was also an editor of anthologies of songs. And Payne was also widely known as an actor and playwright.

This was indeed an imposing coterie for an American city of 1835. The only other group comparable to it was that of Boston, which was reputed more logical, cold, and self-complacent. *The Church Review* fifteen years later in a leading article, "Schools in American Literature," drew an interesting contrast between the New York and Boston groups of writers, vaunting the New York over the Boston school:

When we mention the names of Irving, Paulding, Cooper, Verplanck, Sands, and Hoffman we think we strike a chord in the

5. Hoffman Manuscript Letters in possession of E. F. Hoffman.

heart of our readers, which vibrates with a more tender feeling than that which would respond to our mention of their cleverest Eastern [Boston School] contemporaries. . . . They have been industrious without parade of effort, scholarly without ostentation, active without bustle, and efficient without self-conceit; and, altogether, there is about them a unity of manner, thought, and moral principle, and even a negative quality of style, which constitute them, with others, a literary school.⁶

There were two main places of gathering for these New York literary men—both of them bookshops. The first was in a back room of the shop of Charles Wiley at the corner of Wall and New Streets, where Cooper, Halleck, Dana and others were wont to congregate. The other popular meeting place was at the bookshop of John R. Bartlett on the ground floor of the famous Astor House, then widely reputed a veritable palace. Here John R. Bartlett received all his literary friends and discussed with them the latest books or the latest issues of the many magazines. Here too he “arranged the greater part of his *Dictionary of Americanisms*,”⁷ by which his name is still remembered.⁸

The *Café Français* in Warren Street was also a chief gathering place for the literati; and here the poets, Halleck and Hoffman, were daily visitors.⁹

Into such a group of congenial ambitious writers Hoffman returned after his experience of a winter in the West. Bartlett's bookstore seems to have been Hoffman's favorite visiting place, and here he participated in

6. *The Church Review*, Vol. III, p. 342 (October, 1850).

7. Hemstreet, *op cit.*, p. 172.

8. Charles Fenno Hoffman reviewed this book favorably in *The Literary World*, Vol. III, p. 561 (August 19, 1848).

9. James G. Wilson, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 360.

the discussion of recent books and magazines. Here, too, he introduced Lewis Gaylord Clark into the literary group of New York.¹⁰ "Into that Astor Store," says Donald Grant Mitchell, "there must have gone . . . a spectacled, keen-sighted man, halting a little, . . . who had done work with Willis on the *Mirror*, and better work on his own American magazine. . . . This was poor Hoffman."¹¹

Almost a half century later a writer who remembered Hoffman well presented a very clear picture of him as

a man of tall figure, with broad shoulders and a general physique indicating that he had been originally intended for a man of robust habit, until accident and occupation had combined to thin him and, possibly, "fine" him a little. Bearing in appearance, gesture, and speech, evidence of the very good old blood to which he belonged; and a thorough gentlemen at every point. A fine head, with dark brown hair, quite decidedly inclined to wavy curl; whiskers of the same color and character quite surrounding the face, though with the lips and chin clean-shaven; a good and rather firm mouth; nose slightly low, though of fair length, and the reverse of aquiline; and pleasant eyes, well browed, but always hidden behind the glasses made necessary by short-sight.¹²

Hoffman's first work after his return to New York was to prepare an edition of his travel letters. To those which had appeared in the *American* he added others telling of his experiences on his return home. When this book appeared, later in 1834, both in New York and London, Hoffman was far and wide acclaimed as one of the most interesting and popular of American letter

10. Hemstreet, *op cit.*, p. 176.

11. *American Lands and Letters*, 1899, p. 117.

12. William Keese, *John Keese, Wit and Litterateur*, 1883, p. 42.

writers. Almost every paper had a favorable notice of this publication.

The Knickerbocker highly complimented both his observation and judgment:

It is very rarely indeed that the records of travel present so many features to interest and charm, as are lavishly scattered through these admirable volumes; very seldom that we find in them so happy an assemblage of all the requisites that go to make up a book of the highest attraction. . . . He [Hoffman] has looked upon nature with the eye of a poet, yet with the judgment of a statesman.¹³

The New England Magazine of April, 1835, said that the "author . . . seems to have a very quick and accurate perception of distinctive traits of character, and a happy facility of expression,"¹⁴ and it called the book "lively, instructive and amusing"; it hinted, however, that Hoffman's eye for the nobler traits had made him rather charitable in his judgments.

The American Quarterly Review, in a twenty-page article on this book, complimented him on the motives for his journey when it said:

he seems to have travelled from motives of liberal curiosity, and with a generous determination to set down naught in malice and nothing to extenuate. He is both a scholar and a gentleman; and while he evinces a nice taste and discriminating powers, he makes both subservient to the rules of propriety.¹⁵

The American Monthly Magazine said among other things:

13. Vol. V, pp. 250-51 (March, 1835).

14. Vol. VIII, p. 323.

15. Vol. XVII, p. 197 (March, 1835).

Possessing all the interest of personal adventure, with all the wildness and romance of fiction, we dare assert that this lively little narrative will contribute more largely to the information of Americans, on a subject, concerning which to be ignorant is indeed disgraceful, than any work that has hitherto been sent forth from the press either in this or in the mother country; and that, unless we are vastly mistaken, it will be the most popular work of the season, both here and in England, where it must be at once republished. . . . we therefore proceed at once, after recording our admiration both of the style and matter, to lay before our readers such specimens as we deem most interesting and most conducive to the forming a correct idea of "A Winter in the West."¹⁶

This review touched upon one of the important reasons for the success of the book: a desire of the reading public for novelty of scene, coupled with a growing interest in information on conditions in the West. But Hoffman did not enter into long discourses concerning the political and social institutions, as visitors studying conditions in a strange country often do. He merely presented an interesting picture of the scenery, described the character of the people he met, told an interesting anecdote, or made his readers acquainted with his own reflections as he rode alone. There can be no doubt that the subject with which Hoffman was dealing was an appealing one not only because a number of recent travel accounts had aroused a debate about the virtues of the frontier, but also because so little was really known in the East about the country through which he traveled. And Hoffman should certainly be given credit for not making his book a magazine of wonders to appeal to the imaginations of the credulous.

16. Vol. IV, p. 259 (December, 1834).

In England the reception was equally friendly. *The Athenæum*, at the time of the London reprint by Bentley, devoted four columns to the favorable criticism of this work, averring that it was pleasant, readable and interesting, and that the narrative ran on smoothly and easily. It did, however, make the criticism that the style was "somewhat stilted and ornate."¹⁷ *The Quarterly Review* (London) commented more briefly but favorably.¹⁸ It is questionable whether any modern reader would find *A Winter in the West* a satisfying book of travel. Its appeal was perhaps only for its own time, and it lacks the insight into human nature that may give long life to a book of this kind. But there was need for such a book in its own time and Hoffman supplied the demand as few of his contemporaries could have done. Not only his faculty for observation, but his familiarity with the out-of-doors, his eye trained to select features of general interest, and his skill in presentation were all partly responsible for its success. But above all these matters of literary training was the kindliness of the personality of Hoffman. These letters, which were often practically essays, were Hoffman himself. His activity of mind and body, his love of nature and humanity, his sense of humor, his sympathy for human beings less fortunate than himself, and his modesty are evident throughout the work.

Thirty years later Henry T. Tuckerman called this book a model of its kind and gave credit to both observation and treatment:

17. Vol. VIII, p. 223 (March 21, 1835).

18. Vol. LIV, p. 413 (September, 1835).

There was the right admixture of poetical and patriotic instinct, of knowledge of books and of the world, and of the love both of nature and adventure, to make him an agreeable and instructive delineator of an experience which, to many equally intelligent travelers, would have been devoid of consecutive interest. . . . He notes the weather, describes the face of the country, recalls the Indian legends, speculates on the characters and modes of life, and discusses the historical antecedents, as he slowly roams over Eastern Pennsylvania, Michigan, Kentucky, Virginia, and Illinois, with a lively tone and yet not without grave sympathy. . . . Men and manners are treated with an acute, generalized, and manly criticism; the animals, the river craft, the flowers, the game, the origin and growth of towns, the aspect and resources of the country, are each and all congenial themes. He so enjoys the observation thereof, as to put the reader in relation with himself.¹⁹

Many other smaller magazines and newspapers, both at home and abroad, commented on this first book from the pen of Hoffman and helped to give him courage, and perhaps money, for his next ventures. It seems impossible to determine what he received for his work. About the same time Irving received £400 for the English edition of *A Tour on the Prairies* and \$1,500 for the American rights from Carey, Lea and Blanchard of Philadelphia.²⁰ Hoffman's reputation, of course, did not compare with that of Irving; and even if he had enjoyed Irving's popularity, the fact that his letters had already appeared in the columns of the *American* and had been largely read by the New York public might have helped to cut down his income from the sales.

Hoffman, however, was able to stand financially on his own feet, and naturally his first desire was to return

19. *America and Her Commentators*, 1864, pp. 416-17.

20. P. M. Irving, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 66-67.

to newspaper or magazine work, and if possible secure his own magazine. In looking over the field for a New York magazine of high class he probably considered only two: *The Knickerbocker*, which he himself had started with the issue of January, 1833; and *The American Monthly Magazine*, which had been established by H. W. Herbert and A. D. Patterson in March, 1833, and which Hoffman himself had commended in the *American* before his trip to the West. *The American Monthly* was having difficulty with its printing and its finances, and accordingly he made his advances to that magazine.²¹ He apparently experienced no difficulty in establishing this connection and within a short time assumed the editorship, Henry W. Herbert assisting him. With the issue of March 1, 1835, the initial "H" began to appear after an occasional article. In undertaking the responsibility for this periodical Hoffman pointed out that emphasis would be placed on the mechanics of printing as well as on the quality of the contributions:

The American Monthly having passed into the hands of the subscriber, he trusts that the new series, which commences with the present number, will be found worthy of liberal encouragement and support.

The reputation for talent, scholarship, and independent criticism, which the work has hitherto maintained, would prevent the proprietor from preferring any additional claim to public favor, were not the gentleman²² who has hitherto conducted it still to be

21. Vol. IV, p. 422 (February, 1835), announces Hoffman's relationship.

22. Mr. Herbert, one year younger than Hoffman, was also a hunter and sportsman of note, and his contributions to various magazines under the name of "Frank Forester" made him a well known and popular man of his time. His translations from the French as well as his own contributions such as *The Deer Stalkers*, 1845, and *My Shooting Box*,

associated with him in the editorial duties, but he hopes that, with the present improvements in the mechanical department, and others which are contemplated, as well as by strict punctuality, in the future issuing of the magazine on the first of each month, the *American Monthly* may extend and confirm its existing reputation among the permanent periodicals of the country.

The Magazine will, as heretofore, consist wholly of original papers:—Tales of pure and historical fiction; and Sketches of travel and adventure at home and abroad; Essays upon subjects of permanent interest to the American public; and Reviews of such new works as may possess a national character from originating at home, or may have a bearing upon taste and opinions on this side of the Atlantic. In a word, every effort will be made to give the work an original and strongly-marked American character.

C. F. HOFFMAN.²³

Naturally Hoffman's contributions were prominent among the pages of this magazine, but it was only occasionally that he allowed the initial "H" to be placed after his works, for the *American* was an aristocrat and prided itself that while it had

never put forth the name of a contributor as a lure to either writer or reader, . . . many of the ablest minds in the country have quietly made it their medium of communicating with the public, and kept its prosperity continually on the increase.²⁴

A number of the articles, however, are followed by the initial "H," and even though the name of Hoffman's

1846, netted him a good income. In an undated letter to Rufus W. Griswold (MS. in Boston Public Library), Herbert showed how well he was paid when he said, "I never wrote a magazine article for Godey or anybody else under 25 dollars since 1837."

23. The inside of the back cover for March, 1835, contains this announcement to the public. A copy of this cover and announcement is in the New York Public Library.

24. Vol. VI, p. 478 (February, 1836).

co-editor began with "H," that letter had not appeared before any article prior to Hoffman's editorship, and it seems safe to assume that the contributions so marked are by Hoffman. Among his contributions to the first volume are Indian stories, social and literary essays, and a few poems.

On January 1, 1836, nine months after Hoffman became interested in this magazine, there occurred an important consolidation which brought added subscriptions, equipment, and talent to *The American Monthly*. On that date the magazine joined forces with *The New England Magazine*, of Boston, which had been running successfully under the editorial charge of Park Benjamin. It had been established in July, 1831, and had had two other journals merged with it—*The American Monthly Review*, which had been founded and edited by Professor Willard, of Harvard University, and *The United States Magazine*, begun by Park Benjamin and Epes Sargent. Since the fiscal year of *The New England Magazine* expired with the December number, 1835, the first issue of the new series began with January, 1836, although the fiscal year of *The American Monthly* did not expire until the following February. Hoffman still held his position as editor, but was now assisted by Park Benjamin in Boston instead of by H. W. Herbert in New York.

In July, 1836, a fire destroyed all the back numbers of the *American*, and many of the original manuscripts, including "copy" for the August issue. "The immediate loss to the proprietor," says Hoffman, "though he saved nothing but the subscription books of the Magazine, is slight, in comparison with the calamity which has over-

taken others in the same extensive establishment.”²⁵ The August number appeared, in spite of this misfortune, with its usual number of original articles, poems and criticisms.

The American Monthly continued to rank very high and to receive favorable comments. But Hoffman's contributions henceforth were not so numerous, and *The New-Yorker*, noticing this fact, suggested that it might be due to lack of energy on Hoffman's part:

In fine, the Magazine is very well this month. There is talent enough connected with the work to render it highly and deservedly popular; are we wrong in believing that there is less of industry?²⁶

Hoffman, who had evidently been taking advantage of those out-of-door sports to which Wilson attributes his low standing at Columbia, took the hint from *The New-Yorker*, which next month commented:

Our December copy of this work [*The American Monthly*] . . . is decidedly better than it has been for months. We mark the pen of our favorite Editor—or we greatly mistake—on a large proportion of its well filled pages. The thrilling story of ‘Alice Vere’—indeed, all our selections for this week are of this stamp.²⁷

Hoffman himself admitted that he was very often negligent in his duties:

The fact is, I have such a devil of a bad reputation for laziness that I want to get credit in your book [*The Poets and Poetry of*

25. *The American Monthly Magazine*, N.S., Vol. II, p. 190 (August, 1836).

26. Vol. II, p. 125 (November 12, 1836).

27. Vol. II, p. 173 (December 3, 1836); *The New-Yorker* copied Hoffman's “Alice Vere” in this same issue on pp. 165-66.

America] for every atom of industry that really belongs to me, and that without jostling the fame of others.²⁸

When the December issue of *The American Monthly* appeared, *The New-Yorker* commended Hoffman's editorial on "The Education of the Blood" as "worthy of the vigorous pen and manly spirit of its author." Hoffman continued his industry and just two months later, in the issue for February, 1837, appeared the first installment of "Vanderlyn," his only novel published in serial form. Perhaps "Vanderlyn" was not a serial, for it is doubtful if inserting chapters when room is available and leaving them out when room is not available can produce a "serial." This work certainly adds nothing to Hoffman's fame. Lacking in character portrayal and study of social conditions, it is modeled upon the Spanish picaresque type of story so well developed in *Gil Blas*.²⁹ The full title is "Vanderlyn, or the Fortunes of an Adventurer."³⁰ Both title and content remind one of the rogue romance type of story; indeed Hoffman's work might better be entitled "Vanderlyn, or the Misfortunes of an Adventurer," for twenty chapters of adventure bring him nothing but mis-

28. Charles Fenno Hoffman to Rufus W. Griswold, January 11, 1842, in W. M. Griswold, *Passages from the Correspondence and Other Papers of Rufus W. Griswold*, 1898, p. 104.

29. Hoffman had evidently greatly enjoyed *Gil Blas* as was shown in his toast at the dinner given to Mr. Verplanck: "Alexander Slidell, the author of *A Year in Spain*—His pen has freshened up the colors and quickened into new life the creations of Le Sage and Cervantes." (*The New-York Evening Post*, April 30, 1831, p. 2, col. 5.)

30. Although the first installment of "Vanderlyn" (*The American Monthly*, February, 1837) bears the title of "Vanderlyn, A Novel" (p. 105), later (p. 272 and p. 362) it is called "Vanderlyn, or the Fortunes of an Adventurer"; on p. 489 and p. 613 it appears as "Vanderlyn" only.

fortune. The story is told in the first person, which of course helps to add somewhat to its reality; but even that device does not make it convincing.

In the first three chapters, the hero, Washington Vanderlyn, aged seventeen, who has lived a normal, easy life with his father and brothers on a Long Island estate, suddenly becomes involved in a quarrel with his father and determines to leave home. He appeals to his sweetheart to promise to marry him, but he is rejected and forthwith sets out for New York. As he crosses the East River, his boatman allows the skiff to be run down by a steamboat. Though Vanderlyn himself barely escapes drowning, he manages to save the life of a beautiful woman passenger, whom he promises to meet on the morrow. But this meeting is delayed for eighteen months, for young Washington, upon his arrival at the City Hotel, where a crowd is gathering for a ball, is too enthusiastic in his desire to witness the affair and is knocked senseless by a policeman's club. Enraged at this action, the throng attacks the policeman to rescue Vanderlyn, and in the resulting fight, the hero's prostrate body is trampled upon by the mob. He is taken to the police station, locked up, and then, for some insulting remarks to his jailer, is put into a dungeon, where he finds a maniac. He and the maniac become engaged in a desperate encounter which soon develops into a death struggle. Finally, with a superhuman effort, Vanderlyn throws off the maniac from the death grapple at his throat, just as he himself faints away. He awakes from a delirium several weeks later to find himself in the hands of a friend of his father. These adventures which Hoffman causes his hero to experience seem highly improbable but give an excuse for bringing into the story

local landmarks such as the City Hotel, already mentioned. Making his hero a master of riding and swordsmanship, he has him take part in a Grand Fencing Exhibition and Tournament, and in this way presents a picture of the customs of New York about 1810. Vanderlyn admits, while giving the account of the tournament, that "the whole affair does, I confess, seem somewhat ridiculous, when I review it with my present taste and habits," but hastens to add: "The truth is, we were a more simple, earnest, and natural people twenty-five years since than now. We had not yet learned that apathy was the essence of good breeding, and sneering the soul of wit."³¹

In spite of his remarkable series of adventures, Vanderlyn is made to appear as an extremely modest youth who, like John Ridd in *Lorna Doone*, frequently apologizes for telling his own story.

"I am now coming to a part of my memoirs," he says in one passage,

over which self-love would prompt me to draw a veil; but bearing in mind the motto I have chosen for these volumes ["There is a Divinity which shapes our ends rough hew them how we will"], I shall not shield this part of my career from scrutiny—I shall boldly dissect my own life and conduct, in order that the latter may serve to warn him that standeth to take heed lest he fall; and that the moral of the former may hold out the blessed hope of retrieval to him that hath fallen.³²

The whole story is a series of episodes which seem to indicate the piling of brick upon brick with very little attention to the mortar between. Accordingly, it is not

31. *The American Monthly Magazine*, N. S., Vol. III, p. 492 (May, 1837).

32. *Ibid.*, p. 618 (June, 1837).

surprising to find Chapter VI omitted with the comment "Rather Episodical" and with a footnote by the editors:

Omitted accordingly. It comprises only an account of the steps which Vanderlyn took to obtain legal reparation for the injuries described in Chap. iv., and, though containing some keen satire upon the administration of justice in the criminal courts of New-York, it would read better as the chapter of a novel than in the pages of a magazine.—Eds. Am. Mon.³³

Chapter X disposes of an unfortunate love affair by the easy expedient of giving a quotation from Byron:

Her heart was formed to softness, warped to wrong,
Betrayed too early and beguiled too long.³⁴

Chapter XI is likewise reduced with the following notation by the editor, that is, Hoffman himself:

The author will see that we have taken the liberty of omitting several pages of his MSS. The scenes which he described with so much earnestness of feeling are not exactly suited to our pages. The whole story of Calanthé, and the last scene with Joselyn particularly, are too horrible even for this horror-loving age.³⁵

Throughout the whole appearance of this, his first long piece of fiction, Hoffman attempts to make his characters real, taking as many as four long pages to the introduction of Brasleigh, who then takes part in only one episode. But even by giving a long detailed description, in the manner of Scott perhaps, Hoffman does not make the characters attain the distinction of individuality that they reach in his *Greyslaer* three years later.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 489 (May, 1837).

34. *Ibid.*, N. S., Vol. IV, p. 61 (July, 1837).

35. *Ibid.*, p. 61, note.

After an uninteresting, prolonged, moralistic Chapter XV in the September number of *The American Monthly* nothing appeared in the October issue, but the story is again resumed with Chapter XX in November. Here Vanderlyn actually starts for the West, which has been his goal for eighteen chapters; and the prospect of a description of life among the Indians, a subject with which Hoffman might be expected to do his best, gives new zest to the reader. But Vanderlyn immediately meets with a Major Peabody, an adventurer like himself, who outdoes even Gil Blas in the practice of quack medicine. In the next twenty pages, the last to appear, the cold-blooded major tells of his wild adventures, while Vanderlyn, temporarily resting from his own thrilling experiences, sits on the deck of an Ohio River steamboat and listens to the story. With Chapter XX the serial comes to an untimely end; in fact all of Hoffman's contributions to *The American Monthly* seem to stop with the December issue. The completion of this novel could have added nothing to his reputation; and these chapters which had already appeared had very little value except as training for *Greyslaer*, his next attempt at fiction.

The great amount of work from the pen of Hoffman appearing in *The American Monthly* would seem to indicate that he was now devoting his entire time to that publication. Such was not the case, however, for on December 8, 1836, Mr. Dearborn, the publisher, had determined to issue a New York book of verse in time for the holiday trade. Hoffman, who was asked to edit the volume, was soon busy gathering poems from natives of New York; and he made such speed that within two weeks from the time the idea was conceived the volume

had actually appeared. Hoffman wrote his friend, John B. Van Schaick,³⁶ whom he had met while in Albany, of his difficulties in preparing this book:

New York, Dec. 12th, 1836.

My dear Van:

I write to you in haste and though it may prove a bore you must try an [sic] answer in equal haste, if possible. The matter in a word is this: four days ago Mr. Dearborn determined to get up a "New York Book" of poetry and have it out in ten days from this—that is in time for the holidays. Several of his acquaintances were applied to for their commonplace books and together we have raked up some dozen or two names of persons born in this state who have written verses worth collecting and doubtless there are as many more of whom we know nothing. I had but one piece of Bogart's, a drinking song which is already struck off on handsome 8 vo sheets.³⁷ But I have none of yours.³⁸ My papers many of them having been burnt last summer. Now I want you to send three or four of the best of your "old iron" and moreover to get permission from Miss Dewitt that was and Miss Vanderpool that is, not [sic] to publish "The Wife" and some of their other pieces which you must obtain with their names and you can tell them—or whatever instrument you use to extract poettics [?] from them—that the whole collection consists chiefly of private names for the first time affixed to pieces that have appeared anonymously.³⁹ Have you nothing of Henry L. Bogart's? ⁴⁰ The Knickerbockers must flare up. If the volume which will consist of 200

36. Van Schaick was one time Whig candidate for Senator from New York (*The New-Yorker*, Vol. IV, p. 480), was first Vice-President of the Young Men's Convention in New York (*New-York American*, Sept. 27, 1834), and held other honors before his early death.

37. "Anacreontic," by A. H. Bogart, p. 10.

38. John B. Van Schaick contributed "Joshua Commanding the Sun and Moon to Stand Still," pp. 184-86, and "Canzonet," pp. 201-2.

39. Nothing appears in *The New-York Book* from the pen of either of these writers. Evidently Van Schaick was not successful.

40. "Lines Written in an Album," p. 85, is the only selection by W. H. L. Bogart.

pages⁴¹ succeeds, it will be followed by another to whip in the pieces which have lagged behind this. The writers must be natives of New York. The thing was started by my proposing to Dearborn to get up a book representing real Knickerbockers solely—to be called “The Wreath of St. Nicholas.” But thinking it could not be filled up well or would not sell he determined to publish a more general affair and call it “The New York Book.” By the by I forgot to tell you that the whole matter is a secret yet which you must betray only so far as it may be necessary. Did you read Verplanck’s introduction to “The Fairy Book”? I shall urge him to write just such another for Dearborn’s collection.⁴²

Very cordially yours,

C. F. H.

N. B. Why do you not let me know at my office—I mean that of the Monthly—when you visit N. York? I live three miles out of town and go so little into society that I never hear when my friends from other places are in the city. I called twice on you when I last heard you were here and repeatedly before when hearing of your being here. I have sought you just in time to learn that you were gone. I live such an oozy life now that it is a real pleasure to me to *well out* to an old friend occasionally.⁴³

This publication was a success in spite of its hasty compilation. It adhered strictly to the plan of including only native New Yorkers and was severely criticized for this limitation by *The New-Yorker* of January 7, 1837:

There is one defect in the plan of the Book: it confines its selections most rigorously to the writings of natives of the State of New-York. By this miserably narrow distinction we are deprived of the credit of our own Bryant and Halleck, who in fact and in the world’s estimation are not only eminent but New-York poets. So, while W. G. Clark is liberally quoted as a New-Yorker,

41. It actually totaled 253 pages.

42. Although Mr. Verplanck did not write an introduction to this book, he contributed “Prophetic,” p. 224, and “Portraiture,” pp. 231-34.

43. Manuscript letter in Pennsylvania Historical Society, Philadelphia.

those who have created a reputation for our local literature are entirely excluded from a book of specimens of the poets and poetry of New-York. This is not merely derogatory to our own fame; it is absurd.

The haste with which the book was brought out is perhaps excusable; and, being so, it excuses any faults consequent thereon. Since we are sure the gentleman who edited the work is every way qualified for the task, we should have been pleased that an opportunity had been afforded him to render it and himself ample justice.⁴⁴

The volume included some hundred and fifty poems written by fifty-three authors. Hoffman chose thirteen of his own poems, the best known of which are "Anacreontic," "Rosalie Clare," and "Moonlight on the Hudson." Other well-known writers represented were Joseph Rodman Drake, Washington Irving, Willis Gaylord Clark, William Leggett, James K. Paulding, Robert C. Sands, Albert B. Street, Gulian C. Verplanck, and Theodore Fay. Clement C. Moore's "A Visit from St. Nicholas" had appeared in a variety of publications but never before, said *The American Monthly*,⁴⁵ under the name of the real author. *The Knickerbocker*,⁴⁶ as well as *The New-Yorker*, declared that the selections had been made with discrimination and the work tastefully presented.

A second issue of this book, identical in content with the first, appeared in the summer of 1837; and *The New York Review*, with its usual friendliness, characterized it as "a worthy attempt to rescue from oblivion many miscellaneous poems which, with their full share of excellence, were in danger of perishing with the loose frag-

44. *The New-Yorker*, Vol. II, p. 253 (January 7, 1837).

45. Vol. III, p. 98 (January, 1837).

46. Vol. IX, p. 100 (January, 1837).

mentary literature of the day.”⁴⁷ There seems to be no evidence that a new edition was projected.

The last months of 1836 and the first months of 1837 were indeed busy ones for Hoffman. In addition to preparing a large number of articles for his own magazine and collecting and editing the poems for *The New-York Book of Poetry*, he was working on a project which was very near to his heart. Although he was a native New Yorker and “staunchest of Knickerbockers,” his travels had given him a broad view of the country as a whole, and he dreamed of raising the literary standard for the entire nation. His writings on the copyright, his encouragement in later years of young authors, and the commendation in his reviews of books which admittedly deserved small praise, all indicate his eagerness for the development of his native literature. On January 11, 1837, aiming to overcome the sectional rivalry existing among Boston, New York and Philadelphia, he offered Robert Montgomery Bird the position of Philadelphia editor of *The American Monthly*. Bird was to receive a yearly salary of \$500 but not, as Clement E. Foust indicates,⁴⁸ two dollars per page for work of his own.

The following letter is interesting as showing Hoffman’s plan in more detail:

New York Jany 11th 1837

Dear Sir,

I am induced to address you upon the subject mentioned below from having been lately called upon by a person who asked me if the *American Monthly* was for sale; and at the same time men-

47. Vol. I, p. 441 (October, 1837).

48. Clement E. Foust, *The Life of Robert Montgomery Bird*, 1919, p. 112.

tioned that a magazine was about to be started in Philadelphia by you—If such be the case and your plans are not yet matured the proposition I have to make may be deemed worthy of acceptance by you.

At the risque of appearing egotistical I will make a preliminary observation or two before stating it.

I have been for some time—without my own name appearing much in the matter—endeavoring to build up a periodical which should in every sense of the word be a *National One*, and the sectional feeling which more or less pervades every part of our Country is the greatest difficulty I have had to contend with, it is in fact almost impossible to push a periodical, that hails from only one part of the Union, in others: and the only publications which have succeeded in the attempt are those which, like the British Quarterlies and Monthlys are written entirely abroad, or those which, like some that will suggest themselves to you, derive a certain *eclat* from their foreign contributions. A periodical that addresses itself particularly to New Yorkers, or that is peculiarly Bostonian or Philadelphian in its character, may meet with support so far as the city whence it emanated is concerned but one which aims at being *National* and American awakens no partizan feeling in its behalf and can scarcely struggle against its English competitors: which from our felonious copyright privileges can be afforded at half the price.

To you who have done so much to illustrate the literary resources of your Native Country I need hardly suggest the ill effects of this upon their development. The worst consequence I think however of our country being thus flooded with foreign periodical literature is intellectually to denationalize our upper classes, *all their thinking is done abroad*. at least all their sentiments—all their opinions upon those small matters which in the aggregate make up the general tone of mind in society, either come in the first instance from London or, when originating on this side the water, are sent thither to receive the impress which can alone make them current here. Unhappily too this left handed alliance with the figuranti of what is called “fashionable literature” is anything but an honorable marriage with the master minds of England. Our

connection with them is like the boasted intimacy of a cockney with a certain noble Duke—He was on the best of terms with a footman that used to play with his higness's [sic] monkey.

But to come to the point from which we started—By the Union of the New England Magazine with the American Monthly which took place a year since, an important stride was made over the field it is wished to cover, and the new ground secured by by[sic] retaining Mr Benjamin as the *Boston Editor* of the work.

The subject of this communication is to effect an arrangement with you as the *Philadelphia Editor* of the *American Monthly* precisely like that existing with Mr Benjamin and upon the same pecuniary terms leaving it for yourself to judge what literary aid you can furnish upon those terms.

Mr Benjamin has \$500. a year as editor of the *Monthly* his duties consist in passing upon whatever articles may be received for the work in Boston and forwarding those selected to the office here where they are duly paid for by the Publisher. He also receives, or obtains from other pens, whose judgement [sic] he is willing to adopt, notices of such new books as are published in Boston and occasionally contributes an Editorial article, original essay, or Poem

The terms here offered may appear small but the duties are light, and the sum mentioned is actually double that which as the sole proprietor [sic] I at present derive annually from the work. It is to be remembered too that while the magazine thus pays its editors for the use of their name and productions the copyright of the latter remains with the author; and their value in a collected form is frequently enhanced by being thus made known to the public

I am

With great respect

Your obd Servt—

To Dr. Bird

Chas. F. Hoffman

N.B. Mr. Dearborn the Publisher of the American Monthly, in whose name the business concerns of the work are connected,

allows me to give him as the guarantee for the payment of the salaries at such times as the Eds. shall designate.

C.F.H.⁴⁹

After considerable deliberation Bird accepted the position. *The American Monthly* for June announced him as Philadelphia editor, and stated that the work would be published simultaneously in Boston, New York and Philadelphia on the first of every month. Bird contributed two long articles on "The Mammoth Cave of Kentucky" and one on "A Tale of a Snag," but he withdrew in October, 1837,⁵⁰ perhaps, as he explains in an undated letter to Dr. Samuel G. Howe, because he did not enjoy writing for periodicals, considering himself "entirely of too discursive and diffuse a turn . . . to shine in a nut shell."⁵¹ The more probable reason for his withdrawal, however, is found in a letter from Hoffman. No doubt Bird did become tired of his editorial duties, but his failure to receive the two dollars per page which he had expected may well have had some influence on his decision.

N York Feby 2nd 1837

My Dear Sir,

I am sorry that you did not state in your letter of the 21st ult what where [sic] your particular views about conducting the *Monthly* as I doubt not we should at once have agreed with each other Will you let me have them in full as soon as possible. In the meantime as to the "2\$ per page" of which you speak—I in-

49. Manuscript letter in the Library of the University of Pennsylvania.

50. *American Monthly Magazine*, N. S., Vol. V, p. 504 (November, 1837).

51. Foust, *op. cit.*, p. 112. The letter to Howe was in reply to a request for contributions to *The New England Magazine*.

tended when offering \$500 a year that that sum should cover all the expenses to the magazine of engaging your literary services—but that you yourself should be the judge of the extent of literary aid you could render. For some numbers you would of course not write a word,—for others contribute perhaps a chapter from any MS. work you might have on hand or if your editorial duties proved at any time so light as to seem a mere sinecure why furnish a leading article or essay—you still being the judge whether it were due—

With regard to parting with a share of the magazine in Philadelphia—The property now stands in a shape which renders that impracticable. An arrangement can be made however with the publisher to whom you allude which will give him an interest more valueable [sic] perhaps than that of part-ownership. We will allow him 33-1/3 per cent upon all subscribers he can get for the magazine and it will be published in Philadelphia under his name as it now is in Boston under that of Otis Broaders & Co.—

Will you write soon and oblige

Yours very truly

R. M Bird M D.

C. F. HOFFMAN ⁵²

Hoffman, busy with these ambitious plans for the expansion of his magazine as well as with his regular editorial duties, was at the same time burdened by the illness of his father, whom he tried to make comfortable in every possible way. The death of his father, which occurred on January 24, was recorded in *The New-Yorker* four days later.

The next month the same magazine, in commenting upon the barrenness of the February *American Monthly*, paid its compliments to the editor in this fashion:

We do not like the February no. of this work at all. The best thing in it is the opening paper, Vanderlyn which has to be con-

⁵². R. M. Bird Collection in the Library of the University of Pennsylvania.

tinued, where the end should be. . . . The Critical Notices are well done, of course; but they do not redeem the barrenness of the preceding pages. A recent and severe bereavement has doubtless distracted the attention of the New-York editor, and he has neither coadjutor nor contributors who can at all supply his place.⁵³

Shortly afterwards Hoffman resigned the editorship, at about the same time that Bird withdrew. Perhaps Bird's withdrawal and Hoffman's resultant discouragement accounted for Hoffman's resignation. The exact date when Hoffman severed his connection with the *Monthly* has not been determined, but probably it was near the end of 1837.

The issue for January, 1838, announced Robert M. Walsh as associate editor with Park Benjamin, but made no mention of Hoffman's resignation.⁵⁴ Eleven months later, *The New-Yorker*,⁵⁵ which had always been friendly to *The American Monthly* and especially so to Hoffman, published a notice—"TO THE READERS OF THE AMERICAN MONTHLY"—which stated that the magazine had been run at a loss for the past year by R. M. Walsh and Park Benjamin, that it hereby announced its failure, and that *The New-Yorker* instead of *The American Monthly* would be sent to subscribers for the rest of the year.

This failure was not anything peculiar. Most magazines led a very precarious existence at this time, and many were abandoned only after they had been carried on at a loss for years in the hope that they might even-

53. *The New-Yorker*, Vol. II, p. 317 (February 4, 1837).

54. See cover of January issue in Pennsylvania Historical Society, Philadelphia.

55. Vol. VI, p. 109 (November 3, 1838).

tually become financially profitable. A very common experience is that recorded in the gloomy prospectus published by *The New York Review* at the opening of the fifth year, where the editor stated that he wanted to give his magazine every chance to succeed but felt that he could not support it indefinitely.⁵⁶ It failed at the end of that year.⁵⁷ In the three decades from 1820 to 1850 many magazines were doomed to failure,⁵⁸ but the year 1837 was one especially fatal to all business. Firm after firm failed. *The Herald* (New York) ⁵⁹ gave a list of 239 important firms that had already failed in the first five months of 1837, and stated that there were probably as many more less important failures which it could not enumerate.

56. Vol. VIII, p. 541 (April, 1841).

57. For the history of the struggles of such pioneer Western Magazines as *The Hesperian*, *The Western Literary Journal*, *The Western Monthly Magazine*, *The Western Monthly Review*, *The Western Messenger*, see Ralph L. Rusk, *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier*, 1925, Vol. I, pp. 164-203. Many magazines in other parts of the country, such as *The Literary and Theological Review*, *The New England Magazine*, *Southern Literary Journal*, *Southern Review*, *The American Literary Magazine*, *The American Monthly Review*, *The American Quarterly Observer*, *Boston Monthly Magazine*, and *The Boston Quarterly Review*, suffered similar vicissitudes.

58. *The New-Yorker* seems to be one notable exception. In Vol. II, p. 333 (February, 1837), it announces its circulation to have been 4,500, 7,000, and 9,000 at the end of 1, 2, and 3 years, respectively. However, even this paper did not announce any further growth during the year 1837.

59. May 11, 1837, p. 2, col. 3.

CHAPTER VI

THE CRITIC

Although Hoffman's failure to be consistent in signing his contributions to *The American Monthly* makes it quite impossible to arrive at a satisfactory estimate of his achievement at this time, it seems altogether likely that his work on this magazine marks the high point of his career as a critic. Since the time of his connection with the *New-York American* in 1827, he had indeed produced no small amount of critical writing and was to continue to be prolific in the same field for many years to come, in fact until very near the end of his literary life.

Probably Hoffman did more toward the advancement of our literature in his criticisms of the writings of others than he did through his own novels, essays and poetry. Most of his literary criticism was written from about 1828 to 1848, a period of twenty years; and during perhaps three-fourths of this time he was largely responsible for the reviews appearing in several magazines of the highest standing. In encouraging new authors of merit, as well as in keeping better-known authors before the public, he helped greatly to elevate the literary taste of America. During Hoffman's years on the *New-York American*, *The American Monthly Magazine*, *The New-York Mirror*, *The New-Yorker*, *The Evening Gazette* and *The Literary World*, he was responsible in a general way for the rating of new books in those journals.

Doubtless Hoffman himself wrote most of the reviews, but since many were unsigned it is impossible to identify all that were certainly his. Letters and other sources, however, furnish definite proof of his authorship of a small number of critical articles in addition to the many which are plainly marked as his.

Among his first literary notices was a letter on Nathaniel Parker Willis, addressed to John B. Van Schaick, and not intended for publication. It was dated July 10, 1828, when Hoffman was only twenty-two years of age, and probably referred to Willis's first book, *Sketches*, published in Boston in 1827:

I have again in looking over Willis' sketches been pleased with them even more than before. Jephtha's Daughter is superb. The only strong defect in his writings is the fatal facility of his style. I say fatal for it is too easy to be powerful. In his lighter pieces this constitutes their greatest charm but the want of terseness and condensation in his graver performances detracts much from their merit; it is not this exactly either, for I don't know what I'd take away; but however much you may enjoy his pieces while reading them, there is a feeling of disappointment afterwards. You feel like one who follows a delightful path expecting it to lead to some grand prospect and are disappointed to find that the path has only its own beauties to recommend it. This to be sure is the very nature of such writing but I would either have him break off more abruptly or wind up to a pitch of greater interest. He writes too easily and too much. I don't believe any production can excite powerful interest in a reader, unless it costs the writer some labour in its conception. I am disposed to quarrel too with the frequent introduction of pet similes, this too when it cannot arise from poverty of imagination for his is one of excessive pruriency and you always meet with these favourite figures smothered in other beauties. This though is perhaps all hypercriticism, and I would readily compromise with Fortune for the celebrity which W. must com-

mand as a poet, when time and circumstance shall impart a leaven of deeper passion to his poetry and taught him not to squander the coinings of his language so profusely. The few of his prose pieces that I have seen I think superior in elegance and spirit to those of any other American Writer except Washington Irving.—¹

This youthful judgment passed upon Willis's early poetry has been practically confirmed by more experienced minds after almost a century. Unfortunately for Willis, "time and circumstance" never did "impart a leaven of deeper passion to his poetry." Eight years later *The American Monthly*,² which Hoffman was then editing, published a rather severe criticism of the poems of Willis—indeed so severe that it brought a rebuke from Edgar Allan Poe. The authorship of the article which aroused Poe's ire was concealed for some time, but there was a good deal of conjecture, naturally involving Hoffman himself.³ Finally, *The New-Yorker*, in October, 1836, revealed the fact that the article was written by Park Benjamin and not by Hoffman.⁴ It seems very probable that the literary reputation of *The American Monthly* would have been greater if Hoffman had expressed his own views—as in the letter to Van Schaick—instead of allowing Benjamin to appear as spokesman for the magazine. Yet Hoffman himself was clearly guilty of some of the weaknesses which modern readers find in Willis,

1. Manuscript in Pennsylvania Historical Society. See pp. 194-95 below for the rest of this letter.

2. N. S., Vol. II, pp. 209-24 (September, 1836).

3. Poe's remarks in defense of Willis are found in *The Southern Literary Messenger* (Vol. III, pp. 41-42, January, 1837), in a criticism on Bryant, but he thought them important enough to repeat with modifications in the same periodical (Vol. XIV, p. 584, October, 1848) in his essay "The Rationale of Verse."

4. Vol. II, p. 45 (October 8, 1836).

and more than one critic has pointed out that Hoffman and Willis were similar in several respects—in their ages, their poetry and general magazine work, the fact that both contributed to the *Mirror*,⁵ and their engaging personalities. At the time of Hoffman's death in 1884, G. W. Curtis wrote of him with the kindly grace for which he was so well known:

Hoffman was a year older than Willis, and he belonged to the same Knickerbocker group. Willis came from Boston, but Hoffman was of an old Knickerbocker family. Willis had a certain European tone and character, but Hoffman was completely American. . . . Hoffman's books, like Willis's, are read no more, and his name survives only in his familiar song "Sparkling and bright." That alone will give his name yet a longer date than Willis's. . . .

Those who still recall his [Hoffman's] manly figure, and his fresh, breezy, gay manner, will remember the sense of profuse vitality with which he impressed those who saw him. He was a lover of the woods and waters, a natural sportsman, and this taste is reflected in his tales and sketches.⁶

One principle seems to have been dominant in Hoffman's reviews—that criticism should not be entirely destructive. In writing for *The Literary World* under the title of "A Spicy Cut-up of an Author" he agreed with Leigh Hunt that "that criticism is most true which rather

5. Donald Grant Mitchell in *American Lands and Letters*, 1899, p. 117, says Hoffman "had done work with Willis on the *Mirror*, and better work on his own American Magazine—known, too, for certain novels . . . and known of all frolic-loving college boys by his jingling song of

'Sparkling and bright in liquid light,
Does the wine our goblets gleam in.'"

(For Hoffman's editorship of the *Mirror*, see p. 113 below.)

6. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76.

seeks the good than the evil, albeit not to shun our defects or to deny them where they exist." ⁷ He carefully added that he refused to inject any personality into criticism because to do so would be to put the question of a book's merits on a totally false and irrelevant basis.

This does not mean that Hoffman hesitated to say that a book was not good if he thought it was not. For example, the *New-York American* for August 9, 1830, contained two reviews which were largely unfavorable. The first of these discussed the works of Horace Smith. Hoffman declared that, although he always picked up a new book by this author with high expectation, he as regularly put it down disappointed. The second adverse criticism concerned Catherine Maria Sedgwick, the author of *Hope Leslie* and an acquaintance of Hoffman during his early years at Albany. The particular book was *Clarence*, which he thought unfair in its treatment of American manners:

So far as the delineation of individual character is concerned, as well as in the description of some particular scenes, "Clarence" has great and peculiar merits of its own; but we should be sorry to have it received abroad as a general picture of American manners; in which light we look upon it as a complete failure. In fact, however "Clarence" might sustain the reputation of a mere popular novel writer of the day, we are inclined to think it will add . . . little to the celebrity of the gifted authoress of HOPE LESLIE.⁸

But it must be admitted that Hoffman's disapproval of two books in a single issue is unusual. In the succeeding

7. Vol. III, p. 41 (February 19, 1848).

8. *New-York American*, August 9, 1830, p. 2, col. 4. The *American* contained a number of reviews signed by Hoffman's asterisk.

numbers he betrayed his too generous habit of mind by the almost unqualified approval of the Reverend H. Wilbur's *Lexicon of Useful Knowledge*; Williams's *Life of Alexander the Great*, No. IV of the Family Library, a cheap series;⁹ and the *Cabinet History of the British Isles*, by Sir J. MackIntosh.¹⁰

Hoffman's dramatic reviews were not many, but most of those appearing in the *American* were marked with his asterisk. The following criticism of *Hamlet* shows perhaps both his understanding of the play and his appreciation of good acting:

Young Kean's personation of the philosophic and romantic Dane, though not yet perfect, is the truest and most touching that we have ever seen. Philosophic and sentimental, made up as it is of gentleness and bitterness; a mild and thoughtful spirit so wrought upon by grievous injury; "a noble and most sovereign reason, like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh"; so determined in purpose, yet wavering in execution,—the character of Hamlet requires more genius in its conception, more delicacy in its delineation, than any part in the whole range of the drama. Though the changes in Hamlet's mood and demeanor are as varied and decided as the transitions from prose to verse, which so abound in his part of the play, the key to the character—as Goethe says in his fanciful, but just and ingenious criticism upon it in *Wilhelmeister*—is to be found in a single sentence:

"The times are out of joint—oh cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set them right."

Strangely enough, although Mr. Kean's conception of the part throughout was in other respects in accordance with the German poet, he was wholly at fault in the delivery of this passage. Hamlet gives vent in these words to the repining of a gentle and

9. *New-York American*, September 6, 1830, p. 2, col. 1.

10. *Ibid.*

retired disposition at being called upon to take so active a part in the turmoil of the times as to perform the dreadful task imposed upon him by the ghost of his father.—“The times are out of joint” should be spoken in a mild, dejected tone, as a melancholy truth, a most lamentable conviction. “Oh cursed spite, that ever I was born to set them right,” should be uttered with the extreme bitterness of such a spirit as Hamlet’s, shrinking from what he felt to be an odious duty. Mr. Kean spoiled the passage by declaiming it.

“Ere those shoes were old with which she followed my poor father to the grave, like Niobe all tears”—is another instance of decided misconception by the young actor. “*Like Niobe all tears,*” is a sarcasm, and should be spoken in bitter irony: thus Mr. Kean’s father delivers it, and it is one of his best points in the part. With these exceptions, to which we might add one or two trivial misreadings, the personation of Hamlet on Saturday night was a most chaste, true and touching piece of acting. There was a pathos in that first address to his mother, beginning “Seems, Madam?” that spoke at once to our feelings, and we had seldom reason throughout the play to regret that they were so readily enlisted.—The same remark may apply to all the affecting passages of the piece, which were delivered in the most expressive tone of feeling. In the interview with Ophelia, the “Go, go, to a Nunnery,” was spoken the last time with an effect we never heard it pronounced before; and Mr. Kean displayed in this scene rich and varied modulations of the voice, so different from the harsh and guttural utterance of Richard III and Sir Giles Overreach, that we could hardly realize in him the same actor. As regards the soliloquies they had that most essential merit of being delivered abstractedly, as if no audience were present. Their readings we have not the room to particularize, nor can we now recollect any with which we differed. The scene with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern about the pipe, and the advice to the players, was masterly. In short, the whole representation was, with the exceptions we have noticed, a deeply interesting performance, and proved that Mr. Kean may well aspire to the highest rank in his profession.¹¹

11. *Ibid.*, September 21, 1830, p. 2, cols. 3-4.

In an extended article on Thomas Moore's *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron, with Notices of his Life*, Hoffman emphasized Moore's partisan feeling:

He conjured me, (says Moore) by our friendship, if, as he both felt and hoped, I should survive him, not to let unmerited censure settle upon his name, but while I *surrendered him up to condemnation* where he deserved it, to vindicate him when aspersed, (p. 180)—and verily, Mr. Moore, like a Roman hast thou performed thy task; for the character of man was never bared to the world as is that of thy friend in thy thousand closely printed pages.¹²

Throughout his years with the *American* Hoffman's reviews appeared practically every Saturday. Some notion of the total volume may be gained from the fact that they varied in length from a half column to five columns, averaging perhaps one and a half to two columns. He reviewed a great variety of books, such as *The Siamese Twins* by the author of *Pelham* (Bulwer);¹³ *The Romance of History, France*, by Leigh Ritchie;¹⁴ *Our Neighborhood, or Letters on Horticulture and Natural Phenomena, Interspersed with Opinions on Domestic and Moral Economy*, by E. Bliss;¹⁵ *Affecting Scenes—Being Passages from the Diary of a Physician*;¹⁶ *Lives of Painters and Sculptors*, by Allan Cunningham;¹⁷ *Outlines of History from the Earliest Period to the Present Time*; Vol. IV of *Cabinet of History*, by Dr. Lardner;¹⁸ *The Talba, A Romance*, by

12. *New-York American*, January 22, 1831, p. 2, cols. 1-3.

13. *Ibid.*, March 19, 1831, p. 2, cols. 3-4.

14. *Ibid.*, April 23, 1831, p. 2, cols. 5-6.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 2, cols. 4-5.

16. *Ibid.*, April 30, 1831, p. 2, cols. 4-5.

17. *Ibid.*, May 7, 1831, p. 2, cols. 2-5.

18. *Ibid.*, May 14, 1831, p. 2, col. 1.

Mrs. Bray;¹⁹ *Life of Robert Burns*, by Lockhart;²⁰ *The Plays of Philip Massinger*;²¹ *French Reader, or a Step to Translation by Progressive Exercises*, by J. F. A. Boeuf.²² This variety of titles indicates clearly enough the poverty of American literature, which forced the reviewer to appraise books with no pretensions to literary value.

Many of Hoffman's articles on literary topics are not purely critical, as, for example, his strong defense of Washington Irving against the attacks of *The Richmond Whig*. This paper had said, as quoted in the *American*:

A courtier and sycophant, such as Washington Irving—a toad eater by trade—is and must be under a standing suspicion whenever great men are his themes. Washington loves a great, particularly when he is also a *rich*, man, dearly, and would do anything in reason to accommodate him.

Hoffman took evident delight in defending Irving as a national figure and in berating the paper for its calumny:

These are harsh terms to apply to any one, much less to such an individual; . . . It is such attacks as this—misdirected in their object, and unaccountable in their nature—that destroy the just influence of the press. It is the excitement which such language provokes, that keeps it in a state of unhealthy agitation—and lastly, it is the indignant feeling such courses meet with from generous minds, that make [sic] those connected with the press, blush for their occupation. . . . The fame of such men as the author of Columbus belongs to the nation at large; and let every true American look well, that no hand tamper with our common property.²³

19. *Ibid.*, May 14, 1831, p. 2, cols. 1-2.

20. *Ibid.*, July 23, 1831, p. 2, cols. 4-5.

21. *Ibid.*, July 23, 1831, p. 2, cols. 3-4.

22. *Ibid.*, October 15, 1831, p. 2, cols. 4-5.

23. *Ibid.*, May 19, 1831, p. 2, cols. 3-4.

Commenting upon public interest in both the reading and production of literature, Hoffman said in a review of an article on "The Art of Rising in Prose":

Indeed, one is sometimes inclined to suspect that those musty old fellows, Swift and Addison, are completely out of print.

As for our domestic poetry, what shall we say of the incipient Byrons, and L.E.L.'s,²⁴ which the daily prints let loose upon the community; the packs which are let slip from the leashes of weekly, monthly and annual publications; most of whose names are written as boldly upon the waybill of the road to Fame, as if the aspirant thought he had reached the temple and were recording it upon the scroll of the goddess herself.

In short, the literary car of triumph is turned into a "Broadway accommodation," where he may ride who chooses to take a ticket; and Bryant, Halleck, and Hilhouse [sic] are jostled from their seats by any one who offers as a passenger.²⁵

Hoffman's appeal for our own independent production of literature regardless of the reception it might have in England was very forcibly set forth in an article in *The American Monthly* in which he reviewed *Tales of the Border* by James Hall. This is naturally what we should expect from one who realized as Hoffman did the necessity of independent thinking rather than copying:

We are indeed, in one respect, an inconsistent people! We rail at our writers, if they follow in the footsteps of the English novelists, and we desert them if they quit the beaten track! We make a great clamor about the patronage due to native genius, and we suffer it to die of exhaustion and poverty! We complain of the want of an original school of literature, and when, by chance, a strong and daring mind bursts through the trammels, which our own bad taste has imposed upon it, we frown into silence, or smile into

24. Letitia E. Landon, whose writings were very popular both in England and America.

25. *New-York American*, November 13, 1830.

contempt, that very spirit, for whose advent we would fain be thought to watch, in breathless expectation! . . .

The standard of criticism adopted in this country, is, for the most part, equally unjust, and incorrect. Our criticism is comparative, not absolute! We praise a book, because we fancy that it bears some faint resemblance to some other book bepraised in London—for a similar reason we condemn another—and wo betide the author, whose book we can compare to nothing. We stare at him as a prodigy—as a South Sea Islander would regard a steam-boat, or a Cockney an alligator—with mingled astonishment and alarm. We take our fill of gazing and of wonderment, but we neither praise nor censure; oh no! that would be committing ourselves. We can judge whether a work of fiction, if romantic, resemble *Ivanhoe*; or, if fashionable, *Pelham*; we have heard that these are good, and therefore, Mr. American Author, if you copy either of these great models pretty well, we will plaster you to your heart's content—otherwise—avaunt! We will have none of ye!—Unless, indeed, you should, by chance, creep across the Atlantic, and there receive the final *imprimatur*. Then we shall be upon sure ground—then, although a million of times inferior to other American works, which have never been heard of in Pater Noster Row, we can venture upon puffing your book. . . . Shall we never emancipate ourselves from the literary, as our good fathers did, before us, from the political, leading-strings of Europe? Now is the moment! ²⁶

But Hoffman's national feeling did not interfere with his whole-hearted admiration for the greatest English novelist of the time. Remembering his romantic tendencies as well as his interest in history, we are not surprised to find him an admirer of Sir Walter Scott. Even before he wrote *A Winter in the West*, which offered such convincing proof of his romantic sympathies, he explained in the *New-York American* why Scott did not write an epitaph for Byron:

²⁶. Vol. V, p. 11 (March, 1835).

The Charleston Gazette attributes delicacy as the motive of Sir Walter Scott's having declined to furnish an inscription for a monument to Byron at Canandaigua: the reason assigned in a letter of the accomplished baronet received in this city, was extreme illness even at the moment of writing. In this matter of monuments to men of genius, it will hardly be necessary to erect one to Sir Walter at the West, in case he should not derive the hoped for benefit from his Mediterranean voyage: memorials of him in the shape of his works are to be met with in almost every tavern and canal boat on the Erie line. Byron, in several of his letters to Moore, expresses himself delighted with the idea of being read upon the banks of the Hudson. Sir Walter, if he attaches half the value to his cis-atlantic reputation, could not but be gratified to learn that his writings are only equalled in familiar popularity here by those of Burns in his own country.²⁷

At the death of Scott, in 1832, the citizens of New York assembled to pass resolutions in his honor.²⁸ Hoffman, although only twenty-six years of age, was appointed on a committee with Bryant, Irving, William Leggett, Paulding, Verplanck, and a few lesser men, "to conduct all correspondence growing out of these proceedings."

Thirteen years later a very able criticism of Scott's works appeared in *The Evening Gazette* in answer to an unfavorable notice of his poetry appearing in *The Whig Review*. Although the following article from the *Gazette* is not signed by Hoffman, it is identified as his work by a letter²⁹ to Rufus W. Griswold; and in spite of its somewhat controversial character, it is valuable as expressing Hoffman's carefully reasoned estimate of Scott:

27. December 23, 1831, p. 2, col. 4.

28. *The New-York Evening Post*, November 20, 1832.

29. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

WAS WALTER SCOTT A POET.—

Some critical Daniel who has come to judgment in the last number of the Whig Review among other pieces of similar sapiency, denies that Walter Scott is a poet! This doctrine we have seen broached before by the fry of criticlings who, swimming in a quart mug of prosody and preter-pluperfect tenses, are constantly measuring some single scale of the leviathans of literature by their own proportions, and then decide upon their qualities as confidently as a geologist passes upon a mastadon [sic] by fingering a single tooth.

They attack Sir Walter in the first place, because, unlike the Inkfishes of metaphysical poetry, so called, he has no clouded waters around him to give an idea of mysterious unintelligibility, which with these fumbling minds is the great characteristic of high imagination for reaching thought and inspired power. Because all can understand him, they think any one can measure him; and having fairly run him down, and taken his dimensions with a six-inch ivory pocket rule, they cut off a piece of him as a specimen of the noble animal, and label it thus:

“Walter Scott, an ingenious descriptive writer in octo syllabic verse of the physical realities of Scotland, but no poet.”

Reader, go back with us through two or three hundred years to the courts of the James's, where pedantry and barbarism are so strangely blended. See the first Lord Napier making watches and inventing logarithms. See the barbarian Lindsay, and the brutal Morton, the leaders of a semi-civilized nobility, of which the pedantic watchmaker and the schoolmaster of the knight of Flodden, are soon to form a part! Of wildly romantic action, of hard metaphysical learning, there is abundance. But though Robt. Ayton may write better verse than Walter, of national poetic association, there is nothing in Scotland.—John Knox and the Regent Murray are the leading types of the Scottish mind. A few barbarous ditties are all that hallow the land in song.

Now come down nearer to our own day, and ask how much all this is bettered when Dr. Johnson writes his tour to the Hebrides?

And now again stand with your guide book in your hand, upon the shore of Loch Lomond, and ask yourself what “the fatal facil-

ity of the octo-syllabic verse of Scott has done for that land?" Why, man alive, these mere physical realities which you say he describes, he, Scott himself, *created*! He took those barren hills,—he took those rude traditions of the poverty-stricken and semi-civilized Highlands,—he took the scenes and characters which thousands had passed over as unfit for poetry,—he seized upon them with the grasp of a master, and made them glorious in song. He did for the wild hills and mountain fortresses of his country what Burns did for the brae side and the hovel; he gave the echo to its voiceless mountains—he sat [sic] the murmur of its water to immortal music.

Let any one read the early tourists to the Highlands, especially that remarkable anonymous volume of letters supposed to be written by a Commissary of the Army or a spy of the British Government, and published in London early in the last century,—a volume to which either Mr. Senior or Jeffrey traced the materials of *Waverley*,—let any one only read this, and he will learn to estimate the poetic fervor and wonderfully creative power of Scott's mind in using those materials to stamp the now existing romantic character upon the scenes there treated of. The truth is, the patriotism of Scott's heart was so intense, and the romantic sympathies of his nature, mingled so intimately with everything that referred to his own land, that his creations became almost real to himself; and it therefore is hardly wonderful that the poetic associations which he created should be regarded by others as pre-existing realities which he only described.

But to give another illustration of this. It may be remembered that before Scott's time, amid the abundance of British novels, there was scarcely one British Romance; her popular writers in our vernacular of that kind of Fiction generally resorted to Germany, Italy and Spain, as the mysterious region in which to lay the scene of their romantic wonders.—Well, after the great Unknown had proved that a modern romance could be written about Scotland, one of his ablest reviewers in the *London Quarterly*, still refusing to recognize his creative power, showed great metaphysical acumen in proving that Scotland was just the country for a good romance, but only let this unknown author of *Waverley*

try his hand upon England, whose history was so lucid, etc. etc., that imagination would have no vague materials to revel in? Lo! then, Ivanhoe appeared! and when Scott had again made the egg stand upon the table in Kenilworth and Peveril of the Peak, Mr. James, and five thousand others, could discover that English History was full of romance.

But to return to his poetry—technically so called. If creative power be the first great element of poetry, and if such thorough mastery of the reader that he shall believe he is reading a mere animated description of things that belong to all poets in common, be the highest test of skill, “The Lady of the Lake,” is one of the most perfect poems ever written. For it is a creation which every one reads as an actual narrative done into verse, which verse is constantly calling up poetic feeling without the readers ever dreaming that it is poetry itself. You lay down the book and you think what grand *material* this is for Coleridge, or Wordsworth, or Byron. What *thinking meter*, what ideal delicacy, what impassioned soul might be worked in here? You have seen no contortions of the Sybil, and you are therefore unwilling to acknowledge her inspiration. Yet it was this subtle power of the true poet which suggested to you the exhaustless variety of handling of which the simple yet soulful lay of Scott would seem to you to be susceptible.—He has fairly swindled you out of the very highest approval of his art; you accept his forged draught upon the bank of Nature, as a true bill, and are instantly eager to put it out at interest. Some teller of a critic at last gets hold of the note, and he, though passing it over with the same ignorance, as to the self-created value which it represents, still must needs pause and tell us that the figures and cyphering generally in the body of the paper are not such as are now fashionable in the best counting houses. There are clerks who would draw up a much neater note than that; put red lines in it, a vignette, etc. etc.—Anybody could draw such a note as that to be good for funds previously lodged to his credit.

Thou nincum! There were no funds lodged where that note was drawn—it represents nothing behind it. It is a fund itself; and one that has made Scotland rich indeed.³⁰

30. *The Evening Gazette*, June 9, 1845.

In another letter to Griswold³¹ February 19, 1845, he called attention to his opinion of Theodore S. Fay's writings as given in a review of *Norman Leslie* which he had published in *The American Monthly*:

As a picture of life and manners, or as a skilfully woven story, it is a failure; but as an imperfect, though not unattractive, setting, for many an exquisite gem of taste, feeling, and sentiment, it has peculiar merit of its own. It is the work of an essayist, and not of a novel-writer;—the offering, we should think, of a man of decided genius, who had kept himself so much aloof from the world as to have had little opportunity of acquiring skill in pourtraying it.³²

In this same article Hoffman noted the fact that *The Linwoods*, *The Hawks of Hawk Hollow*, *Norman Leslie*, *Clinton Bradshaw* and two more works soon to appear from Harper Brothers' press, made "six works of fiction by native authors, upon native subjects, within as many weeks." He then proceeded to show what a vast amount of romantic material America offered. After emphasizing the romantic tendencies of Charles Brockden Brown and James Fenimore Cooper, he asserted that

the last novel of Mr. Kennedy, [*Horse-shoe Robinson*] has for the present, placed him, in our opinion, decidedly at the head of these—though we understand that the author of the *Yemassee* has a tale of the same period in press, which will challenge, perhaps successfully, the laurel which Mr. Kennedy is now wearing—while a few months more labor upon his last work, a production of singular power and originality, might have enabled Dr. Bird to bear the palm from either. . . . With regard to *The Linwoods* we took occasion to anticipate the opinion it has won, when examining the proof sheets in a previous number.

31. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

32. Vol. VI, pp. 228-37 (November, 1835), "Increase of Novel Writing." The quotations are found on p. 232.

In a letter to R. W. Griswold Hoffman wrote a brief opinion of Freneau which anticipated in a remarkable way the opinion of recent critics:

Do you know, I think you missed it in not giving him more room;—that piece “His blanket tied with yellow strings,” etc. should have been in. There is more of nature and poetry about him than in all the Yankees that follow till you come to Hillhouse. Dwight, Barlow, etc., were men of great intellectual vigor but their poetry was an exercise of mental ingenuity merely.

Freneau, if half an idiot, would still have had more poetry in the other half than could have been squeezed out of all the others boiled down to a consommé.³³

In *The Literary World* Hoffman gives, by way of introducing “An Incident of the Fire at Hamburg,” a very penetrating criticism of Lowell’s poems:

A nicety of execution, a carefulness of arrangement, and a very decided moral aim and tone are demanded by the social requisitions of that section of the land. And in such qualities we are seldom disappointed by the acknowledged poets of New England. On the other hand, they are deficient, to our thinking, in naturalness and spontaneity. Art predominates in their verse. There is more of intellectual force than of poetic emotion; and the play of fancy shows itself rather in ingenuity of expression than warmth of imagery. Their poetry, instead of being the uncontrollable utterance of an o’ermastering sentiment—the lyric gush of feeling,—appears to be calmly and thoughtfully elaborated. An over-consciousness is evident. . . . When confining himself to simple narration we think him [Lowell] most successful. As an evidence, take *An Incident of the Fire at Hamburg*.³⁴

Hoffman voices the then common opinion of Halleck by praising the quality of his poetry and insisting that he has not “injured his reputation by writing too much”:

33. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

34. Vol. II, p. 553 (January 8, 1848).

The Harpers have just published Halleck's poems in a handsome little volume, [*Alnwick Castle with Other Poems*] including a number of poems not embraced in any previous edition of his works. Mr. Halleck enjoys a popularity not exceeded by that of any American poet; and he has certainly never injured his reputation by writing too much. The only complaint ever brought against his poems, is, that there are too few of them. In vigor and strength of imagination, he has no superior; and his writings always exhibit that union of graceful humor with all that is sublime and pathetic, which never fails to prove attractive.

Mr. Halleck seems to us somewhat too severe in judging his own productions—excluding from his volume many that are well worthy of a place in it. Those that he has left, however, are exceedingly beautiful, and the volume is in every way very elegant. It contains a fine view of Alnwick Castle.³⁵

By Melville's *Typee* Hoffman is deeply impressed; and he gives it a two-column review, saying among other complimentary things:

This is one of the most delightful and well written narratives that ever came from an American pen; nor could a fresh, graceful and animated style be more fortunately furnished with a suitable theme to set it off to best advantage.³⁶

Mrs. Elizabeth Oakes Smith also enjoyed Hoffman's approbation.³⁷ In 1843 in a letter to Griswold, Hoffman returned proof of Mrs. Oakes Smith's "Jack Spanker and the Mermaid," which Griswold had evidently sent him to read and correct. On this occasion Hoffman prophesied her success:

35. *The Evening Gazette*, April 3, 1845, p. 2, col. 4.

36. *The Gazette & Times*, March 30, 1846, p. 1, col. 6.

37. Mrs. Oakes Smith frequently entertained at her "literary salon on Sunday evenings" Hoffman, Tuckerman, Greeley, and other distinguished guests. (Mary Alice Wyman, *Two American Pioneers, Seba Smith and Elizabeth Oakes Smith*, New York, 1927, p. 121.)

Mrs. Oaksmith's story was also duly attended to—What a grand affair it is!—Most affluent in language—Most finished in expression—She certainly rises every day & must according to your prophecy & mine take a stand out of hooting distance of any others of our writing women—that is if her constitution be strong enough for the necessary mechanical labor of triumphant authorship.³⁸

Hoffman in his zeal for new material very often allowed his judgment to be swayed somewhat by the feeling that a particular author, even though not especially deserving, was in need of encouragement. In a letter to Colonel Aspinwall³⁹ August 12, 1838, Hoffman says that in reviewing Colonel Stone's book, the *Life of Joseph Brant*, he gave it more consideration than he felt it merited because the writer "deserves in this country patronage for so laborious and patriotic an undertaking." This book is reviewed at great length in the August and September (1838) issues of *The American Monthly*.

Yet after asserting that Colonel Stone has shown "uncommon talent and cleverness at descriptive composition, great research, and a good degree of independence of judgment," Hoffman maintains he does not intend to overlook any particular defects, and proceeds to call attention to such a minor fact as that the author has neglected to explain the meaning of Brant's Indian name of Thayendanagea. The tenor of the whole review, however, is quite favorable and the second installment closes by saying: "It is a work that must have its place in every well-furnished library, and must be read by all

38. See below, p. 232. See also letter of January 1, 1843, pp. 226-27.

39. Manuscript Division, New York Historical Society. For entire letter, see below, p. 213.

who would understand fully the story of the American Revolution." 40

In addition to giving his readers a wider acquaintance with literature through his reviews, Hoffman was also active in encouraging other forms of literary entertainment. Some time after he had written an extended criticism of W. W. Lord's poems 41 he joined with other well-known literary men in securing Lord for a series of lectures in New York. 42

Hoffman's encouragement to young writers was not confined to favorable criticism of their works in his magazine. He sometimes even attempted to aid them in securing publishers, as he did in the cases of Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan and Francis Parkman.

Before Dr. O'Callaghan had achieved a reputation for accuracy and detail in his research into New York State history, he called upon Hoffman for aid in securing a publisher for his first book, because he knew him as one interested in the treatment of the history of New York. Hoffman, apparently impressed by a reading of the manuscript, immediately wrote his friend Fletcher

40. Vol. XII, pp. 188-200 and pp. 273-84. Hoffman makes use of this book in securing material for his treatment of Brant in *Greyslaer*.

41. *The Evening Gazette*, May 24, 1845, p. 2, cols. 1-2.

42. The letter, which is dated November 16, 1846, appeared in *The Gazette & Times*. It was signed by Jona W. Wainright, Charles F. Hoffman, Samuel Ward, John W. Francis, Charles King, and others and asked that Mr. Lord repeat "for themselves and many friends" in New York the course of lectures given at Princeton the preceding autumn on Romantic Poetry. The answer to this letter of request was addressed to "Rev. Dr. Wainright, Charles F. Hoffman, Esq., and others" and signified Mr. Lord's acceptance. (*The Gazette & Times*, December 10, 1846, p. 2, col. 2.)

Harper (one of the younger brothers of Harper and Brothers, the publishers) and urged him to publish Dr. O'Callaghan's work. Hoffman's letter shows not only that O'Callaghan is eminently fitted to perform this task, but also that there is need for such a book:

My dear Sir:

Dr. O'Callaghan of Albany, who has brought me some excellent letters of introduction from valued friends in that place, desires that his *United States History of the Early Settlement of New York* should be printed under the auspices of your house. He has been closely engaged for five years in preparing this volume and as Mr. Schoolcraft writes me: "He has studied and mastered the Dutch language in order to avail himself of a store of facts. He has filled up the period with interesting narration and presented the forerunners of the colony and state in new lights. In some of his views he differs from Bancroft; he is more searching and full than Smith or Yates and Moulton on the period actually discussed. *He has shown a spirit of liberty to have existed long before the period of New England Migration and traces it to the free municipal towns of Holland.*

Now, my Dear Sir, a History of New York, embracing these views is sadly wanted among us and as Dr. O'Callaghan has the strong endorsement of Dr. Beck and of the Honorable Harmanus Bleecker as to the value of his researches, you will readily understand that his manuscript is not one of those upon which the dust of a pigeon hole ought to thicken before time can be found to examine it. There is any quantity of books upon the *Early Settlement of New England*. Do let us have one upon the early settlement of New York.

With much respect,

Truly yours,

C. F. HOFFMAN.

Fletcher Harper, Esq.,

N. B. Will you excuse my adding a suggestion here, my dear sir, which is that you should take the manuscript home yourself and

look it over instead of referring it to Mr. Trisman[?] Or if you cannot do that, would not Mr. Murphy or Mr. Verplanck or some one capable person who feels an interest in New York themes and American books examine it for you? ⁴³

The letter concerning Parkman and *The Oregon Trail* is even more striking. This was written soon after Parkman's return from the West and just before Hoffman had relieved Duyckinck of the editorship of *The Literary World*:

Office Evening Gazette—Thursday

My dear Sir,

Allow me the pleasure of making you acquainted with my friend Mr Francis Parkman of Boston. Mr Parkman has lately returned from the Rocky Mountains whither he went to make some scientific enquiries relative to Indian languages usages etc., with reference to an elaborate work upon these subjects which he contemplates finishing at some distant day.

Meanwhile he has thrown off some easy sketches of his tour to make up a light volume for summer reading. The prevailing interest among all classes about the emigration and routes of emigrants to Oregon must necessarily command a hearing for him with the public. I have therefore my Dear Sir, had no hesitation in commending him to the Editor of "The Literary World" to introduce "The Oregon Trail—or A Summer out of Bounds"—to both Publisher & readers. You will find Parkman a clever fellow & a gentleman as well as a traveller & student worth knowing.

Truly yours

C. F. HOFFMAN.⁴⁴

E. A. Duyckinck, Esq.

N. B. I have just glanced at "the work"—Thank you for Copy—Nothing could look better.

43. Manuscript in the Pennsylvania Historical Society.

44. Manuscript in New York Public Library.

The Literary World did not accept Parkman's "sketches" for publication. They soon appeared, however, in *The Knickerbocker*; and their popularity must have caused *The Literary World* to realize that it had missed an unusual opportunity.

Almost as important as his direct method of helping young authors individually was his effort toward helping all authors by means of a suitable copyright law. Hoffman's ambition for the progress of American literature was pronounced, and he considered protection through copyright a sound basis for encouragement to men of literary ability. Copyright law in the United States until the year 1831 had afforded protection for a period of only fourteen years; but in 1831, the time was extended to twenty-eight years with renewal privileges for an additional fourteen years. This limit for forty-two years worked a hardship on the authors, because printers, after a copyright had expired, could reissue a copy of the original edition in spite of the fact that a revised and corrected edition had appeared in the meantime.⁴⁵

But the international copyright law was not yet born, and the rights of foreign authors were not recognized in this country. As early as 1837 Henry Clay presented to the Senate a petition of British authors asking for copyright privileges in this country⁴⁶ and it was referred to a select committee consisting of Clay, Webster,

45. The first part of Bancroft's *History of the United States* was published in three successive volumes in 1834, 1837 and 1840. Although Bancroft revised and amended these, it was lawful after 1882 for any one to reprint the earlier uncorrected edition. (Brander Matthews, in George Haven Putnam's *The Question of Copyright*, 1896, pp. 340-41.)

46. Thorvald Solberg, *Copyright in Congress, 1789-1904*, *Copyright Office, Bulletin No. 8*, 1905, p. 148.

Buchanan, Preston and Ewing. Although the committee reported favorably on this petition, and introduced a bill extending the privileges of copyright to citizens of Great Britain and France, no action was taken.

In March, 1839, Lord Palmerston extended an invitation through Stevenson, the United States envoy to Great Britain, for the coöperation of the American Government in an international copyright arrangement. Lord Palmerston called attention to the Act of Parliament which extended protection to American authors only upon condition that America returned protection to British authors.⁴⁷ Congress took no action on this opportunity for reciprocity, although Henry Clay advocated such a law and made four definite attempts to arouse the lawmakers to action.

The feeling in favor of an international copyright law was stimulated, no doubt, by Dickens' tour in 1842, as well as by the campaign carried on in numerous periodicals. Irving, whose literary career was drawing to a close, realized that it would be very difficult for a younger American literature to spring up without an international copyright, and strongly favored the passage of such an act. His account of an interesting experience which brought home to him the absolute necessity for a copyright illustrates the characteristic attitude of the publishers:

How much this growing literature may be retarded by the present state of our copyright law, I had recently an instance, in the cavalier treatment of a work of merit, written by an American, who had not yet established a commanding name in the literary

47. Letter of Lord Palmerston, *House Documents of Congress*, Document 187, 27th Congress, Second Session.

market. I undertook, as a friend, to dispose of it for him, but found it impossible to get an offer from any of our principal publishers. They even declined to publish it at the author's cost, alleging that it was not worth their while to trouble themselves about native works, of doubtful success, while they could pick and choose among the successful works daily poured out by the British press, *for which they had nothing to pay for copyright*. This simple fact spoke volumes to me.⁴⁸

On July 19, 1852, a petition of Washington Irving and others, among whom were Herman Melville, William C. Bryant, George P. Putnam, Rufus W. Griswold, Bayard Taylor, and the late James Fenimore Cooper, was presented before the House of Representatives.⁴⁹ This petition, as well as others⁵⁰ received but scant consideration at the time, but nevertheless helped toward the ultimate passage of the bill in 1870.

The year following Dickens's visit, George P. Putnam followed up the agitation in the newspapers and magazines and presented to Congress a petition, signed by ninety-seven New York, Boston, and Philadelphia publishers and printers, maintaining

that this equitable protection would enable the publishers to furnish their fellow-citizens both with foreign and American literature in such forms and at such prices as would truly meet the wants as well as the means of the people, while the writers of books would receive the just compensation for their labor and talent wherever their works may be read.⁵¹

48. Pierre M. Irving, *The Life and Letters of Washington Irving*, 1862, Vol. III, p. 149.

49. *The Congressional Globe*, Vol. XXIV, 32nd Congress, 1st session, Part III, p. 1832 (July 19, 1852).

50. Solberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 429-51.

51. *The Executive Documents, Twenty-Eighth Congress, First Session*, Document 10, p. 1.

The subject of copyright was debated first in the House and then in the Senate for five years until the memorial of John Jay, the most thorough yet presented, appeared in 1848. William Cullen Bryant, Theodore Sedgwick, and Hoffman were among the signers of this document.⁵² Twenty-two years more elapsed before the passage of an international copyright, and Hoffman did not remain in the literary world long enough to see the law passed. But by his agitation in behalf of such a measure he had helped the public to realize its necessity, and in advocating protection for authors had been consistent with his general policy of encouragement of a better national literature.

Both in his advocacy of literary ownership and protection, and in his formal criticism, Hoffman proved at least his devotion to the cause of literature. As a reviewer he worked on the assumption that the function of criticism is not so much to search out faults as to encourage excellence. His criticisms were not, however, uncolored by his feeling that even writers who had not achieved excellence sometimes deserved encouragement, and that his duty to American literature demanded that he give their works as favorable a review as possible.

52. *Congressional Record*, Vol. XIX, pp. 3237-39.

CHAPTER VII

RECOGNIZED AT HOME AND ABROAD

Although critical notices and other editorial responsibilities occupied a great deal of Hoffman's time in his work on *The American Monthly*, his original articles were also prominent and worthy of comment; and therefore when he severed his relations with the *Monthly* late in 1837, he was not long without literary work. His reputation was too extensive, and his pleasing character too widely admired to allow him to be forgotten. Indeed it is highly probable that he had already established a new connection before resigning his old position. His contributions are noticeably absent from the *American* in the May and June issues of 1837, probably because of the fact that he had already begun his work on the *Mirror* in April; "The Twin-Doomed," which he afterward included in *Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie*, appeared in the issue of April 15. On Hoffman's editorship the *Commercial Advertiser* commented in an article headed "The Mirror":

The articles are, as usual, all original, and we can vouch for the high merit of those which we have read—including the tale by Charles F. Hoffman, the capital essay by William Cox, and the poetry by Mr. Bryant. The new arrangement by which the services of Mr. Hoffman are secured in the editorial department, must be very gratifying to the readers of the *Mirror*; his fine talents and excellent taste are treasures in the conduct of a periodical. Col.

Morris will now retire, we presume, to his country-seat in the Highlands, perfectly well satisfied to leave his cherished hebdomadal in the hands of one so well qualified to guide it onward to increase of fame and prosperity.¹

James Gordon Bennett, seeing this article in the *Commercial Advertiser*, was prompted to a very characteristic reply in his own paper, three days later. This comment, which was written under the caption of "The Credit System in Literature," would be much more worthy of consideration were it not from the pen of one who was noted for tearing a passion to tatters and who spoiled the truth in his remarks by his journalistic flippancy:

THE CREDIT SYSTEM IN LITERATURE.—Mr. Chas. F. Hoffman, a young gentleman of good family—some talent—no great strength of mind—tolerable taste—no vigor of soul—capable of writing a gentle paragraph—no original thinker, has become the *locum tenens* of the "New-York Mirror." Accordingly, on the old plan of endorsing for each other, all the evening and morning papers, as in the case of Mr. Daniels, bestriding the Gazette, or Mr. Brooks, the Albany Daily, come out and make "much ado about" his wonderful talents, prodigious acquirements, vast learning and great genius. This is the invariable system of puffing, by which the present bad taste in literature has been blown up into consequence.²

Bennett was very much disliked by the literary men of the day and seemed to take every opportunity to increase his unpopularity. A characteristic example of his boldness as a critic is his reply of May 12, 1837, to an article which had appeared in *The Albany Advertiser*:

1. April 15, 1837, p. 2, col. 3.

2. *The Herald*, April 18, 1837, p. 2, col. 1.

"The gifted Bryant," says the gifted editor of the Albany Advertiser. What is he gifted in? Long, leaden miserable, party columns—that's all. His poetry in spite of the puffs of Mr. Irving, is not equal to Halleck's.

And just a month before this, at the time of the famous dinner of booksellers and authors, the following satiric comment had appeared in his columns:

The committee of the Booksellers who got up the recent splendid festival consisted of John Keese, George Dearborn, H. Z. Pratt, F. Harper and W. Robinson. They debated half a day on the important question,—"*Shall James Gordon Bennett be invited to our festival?*" and decided in the negative, thus gaining one of the greatest triumphs that literature ever won. Mr. John Keese made a splendid speech.

The whole proceedings will be ready in a few days. Till then, take medicine.³

Exactly how long Hoffman conducted the *Mirror* it seems impossible to learn. Whether Rufus W. Griswold is right in saying in his *Poets and Poetry of America* that Hoffman conducted the *Mirror* for a year, or Henry A. Beers is right in saying in his *Nathaniel Parker Willis* that he conducted it for only a month, it is difficult to determine: probably the truth lies between the two. Following the custom of several magazines at that time, the *Mirror* did not publish the names of its editors; but the number of contributions from Hoffman's pen from April to December, 1837, far exceeded his contributions at any other time, and the regular appearance of his writings would seem to indicate his editorship for a period of at least eight or nine months. His articles stop, however, with the issue of December 30, 1837. Since Willis was

3. *Ibid.*, April 13, 1837, p. 2, col. 3.

traveling in the summer of that year with Bartlett, who was making his sketches for *American Scenery*, and did not settle at Glenmary until the late fall, it seems highly probable that Hoffman conducted the *Mirror* for that entire period. During these months of 1837 the *Mirror* had published Hoffman's "Effie Gay," "The Natural Tunnel of Virginia," "The Last Arrow," "The Haunted Inn," "The Dead Clearing," "The Last Man," "New Year's Visiting in Hades," and "Stories of Scenes and Sources of the Hudson," most of which appeared later in his *Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie*.

Hoffman's life this year was no doubt a pleasant one in spite of his severing connections with *The American Monthly*. He was generally desired in social circles for his courteous manners, his reputation as a lecturer was established,⁴ his stories and essays were widely read, and in the literary world he was always welcomed as a poet and as a critic of authority. In the month of April, when he assumed the editorship of the *Mirror*,

there was organized in the city of New York an author's club, of which Washington Irving was chosen president and Fitz-Greene Halleck vice-president. Among its members were James Fenimore Cooper, John Pierpont, Charles Fenno Hoffman, George P. Morris, Calvin Colton, Theodore S. Fay, Grenville Mellen, J. F. Schroeder, D.D., John Inman, James E. DeKay, and many other gentlemen well known in the literary world.⁵

4. *The New-Yorker*, Vol. IV, p. 589 (December 2, 1837), says, under the heading, "Lectures before the Mercantile Library Association": "The delivery of the Annual Course of Lectures for the winter of 1837-8 commenced on Tuesday last—the Introductory by President Duer of Columbia College." Some other lecturers were Professor Babcock, Orville Dewey, Charles King, and C. F. Hoffman.

5. James G. Wilson, *The Life and Letters of Fitz-Greene Halleck*, 1869, p. 400.

This was also the month of the famous dinner of the booksellers and publishers at which Hoffman seems to have been present.⁶ The *Commercial Advertiser*⁷ devotes six full columns to the various speeches, toasts, and entertainments. Hoffman's friend, John Keese, was toast-master. Among others present were the Honorable Albert Gallatin, Washington Irving, James K. Paulding, Fitz-Greene Halleck, William C. Bryant, Orville Dewey, William Duer, Philip Hone, Charles King, Lewis Gaylord Clark, George P. Morris, Edgar Allan Poe, G. P. Putnam, C. S. Francis, William Leggett, John Inman, and H. W. Herbert. Letters or toasts were received from James Fenimore Cooper, Daniel Webster, Noah Webster, Gulian C. Verplanck, Robert M. Bird, Nathaniel P. Willis, and others of note who were unable to be present.

Three years had elapsed since Hoffman's winter trip to the West. He had been held rather too close to his editorial duties for one who loved the out-of-doors as much as he. Now that his duties on *The American Monthly* were ended and his sick father no longer demanded his time and attention, he once more started out on a journey into the woods, this time in the Hudson River Valley. This was not such an adventurous trip as the earlier one, but it was through country which, though partly unsettled, was much more interesting historically than the West. Hoffman was fortunate in having as guide on this journey a certain John Cheney, who seems to have been a veritable Natty Bumppo. In a letter of August

6. James Grant Wilson, *The Memorial History of the City of New-York*, Vol. IV, p. 71.

7. April 3, 1837, p. 1, cols. 1-6.

12, 1838, to his friend Colonel Aspinwall, American Consul at London, Hoffman gave an interesting sketch of Cheney:

My friend, Jno. Cheney, the hero of "The Sources of the Hudson" visited New York lately for the first time and excited much amusement among those who witnessed his simplicity. A gentleman took him to see the giraffes, which delighted him more than any of the sights of this worthy metropolis. He said "they were the *tormentingest* great varmint that ever he did see though he *had* lived in the woods all his life, but long-legged as they were he guessed a moose would trot them off their haunches." The daring fellow has killed six moose last winter with his pistol and brought down the skins with him as a present to the gentleman who entertained him. His friendship for your humble servant he has shown in a way equally characteristic by naming a cascade "Hoffman's Falls," "and I tell ye (quoth John) "I picked him out as nice a *pair of falls* as ever ye did see anyhow they are just such as few men will get at but those like himself—Tucked away they are right snugly among the mountings and that I know will suit him."

They took him to Niblo's gardens ⁸ but the gay assemblages the shrubbery parti-colored lamps music and dancing seemed only to carry his thoughts back to the forest. A gentleman wondering at his expressing no interest in the scenes asked him what he was thinking off. "Why I was just making up my mind that though a *painter* might be flurried at these fireworks and creep under the bushes into one of those dark corners yet a bear would tackle to some of these folks in a way that would soon put an end to their How-de-doing. Tormented lightning! What goings on there'd be then afore the creturs."

At the menagerie he collected a crowd around him by being led on by the keeper to tell some of his own adventures. He had paused in front of a cage containing three young panthers. "Those (said the officious keeper) are three fine specimens of the American cougar or panther of the forest." "I know what they be" quoth Cheney scornfully with folded arms, "They're three painter kittens

8. Niblo's Garden was New York's Coney Island a century ago.

and I've killed one bigger than the hull bilin on em together with a pistol."

This original tired of the town in a few hours and before the second day of his visit was half over started impatiently for his native mountains.⁹

The literary result of this journey was "Scenes and Sources of the Hudson" and other tales, many of which he contributed to the *Mirror*, and some of which he later collected for publication in *Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie*. Early in 1838 he wrote Colonel Aspinwall, asking him to use his good offices in negotiating for the publication of this collection with an English editor. The efficient Colonel had, on March 23, 1832, concluded for Washington Irving a bargain with Colburn and Bentley for one thousand guineas for the two volumes of *The Alhambra*,¹⁰ and he was much interested in helping other American authors to appear before the English public. Hoffman wrote a second letter about *Wild Scenes*:

New York March 18th 1838

My Dear Sir,

I wrote to you sometime since mentioning that I had a work nearly ready for the Press, and asking your kind offices in making an arrangement with an English Publisher. I also enclosed a couple of engravings, illustrating two stories of the collection, which would form suitable vignettes to each volume. The copyist in whose hands I placed the work, at the time, has but now completed his task and I hasten to send the M. S. by the first opportunity. The newly explored sources of the Hudson are attracting much attention here and I am of course desirous of getting my *Notes* before the English Public before anyone else shall strip the

9. For the remainder of this letter see below, p. 213.

10. Pierre M. Irving, *Life and Letters of Washington Irving*, Vol. II, p. 485.

subject of its novelty. As for the other sketches in these volumes you will find that some of them trench upon the ground of Washington Irving's latest works, but I suppose they will prove hardly less acceptable on that account. They were written some years since before *Astoria* or indeed any of his *Prairie Scenes* were given to the public and, having been left unaltered since, have not lost any degree of originality they may possess, by the charm which his unrivalled pen has lent to such themes. These however with other parts of my volumes I fear your good taste will condemn as fantastic and extravagant. But the English critics tell us you know that they can pardon any fault of this kind in "a New People" far more easily than the opposite defect of tameness and polished mediocrity. I had a conversation with Mrs. Jameson just before she left here, about this literary undertaking of mine, and she gave me much encouragement when I explained the character of the book and told her of the Indian supers[ti]tions and *Border Scenes* it was intended to illustrate. Will you oblige me by having a copy sent to her "with the respects of the Author" when published. For the rest My Dear Sir I leave the work wholly in your hands and am content to abide by any arrangement you may make in disposing of it.

If you have the patience to read "The Major's Story,"¹¹ in the second volume, and are reminded by it of any little personal anecdotes of your campaigns upon the Frontiers I should be sensibly obliged to you by recalling them for me at some leisure hour. I spoke to you in my last letter of having a novel under way; and some military incidents I got from Genl Scott have induced me to take my hero to the Canada Border with whose scenery I am tolerably familiar, and having once got him there I must make it worth the reader's while to follow us by rendering the *locale* interesting from any striking incidental matters I can work in. . . .¹² P. S. From the continued "depression of the Trade" here I shall now keep back "Wild Scenes" until they appear in England and

11. This was the story which had appeared as the last chapter of "Vanderlyn."

12. For this omission see below, pp. 210-12.

should like to receive an early copy in order to give the American edition the benefit of a last emendation from the printed sheets.

Manuscript in New York Historical Society Library.

H.

N. B. Upon looking over "Nights in an Indian Lodge" in Vol. I it struck me that the number of Indian phrases introduced in the notes might appear *pedantic*. I gave them originally as both curious in themselves and giving a life-like and real character to the text—if used too freely in your opinion will you run your pencil through them at discretion. The M.S. is divided into "Parts" merely for temporary convenience and not as the *form* of the book.¹³

What arrangement Colonel Aspinwall finally made with Bentley cannot, perhaps, be determined; but the book was published in England in 1839, although it did not appear in this country until 1843. Many of the stories had been included in *Bentley's Miscellany* before they were printed in book form, the first one, a ghost story, "The Inn of Wolfswald," appearing in July, 1839; and "The Dead Clearing," "A Night on the Enchanted Mountains," "The Missionary Bride," "The Ghost Riders" and "The Twin-Doomed" following in subsequent issues. Perhaps Hoffman derived some advantage from the fact that *Oliver Twist* was being published in the same magazine at that time.

Hoffman was vexed by his delay in arranging for a publisher in this country; and he wrote Colonel Aspinwall a year later, March 9, 1839, that

The Harpers after a dozen procrastinating intrusions have put me out of course of publishing here as they say that the republication of the stories from Bentley's *Miscellany* in all our newspapers shows it not worthwhile for them now to take hold of the matter.¹⁴

13. Manuscript in New York Historical Society Library.

14. See below, pp. 216-17, for remainder of this letter.

The Harpers were doubtless justified in their decision not to accept *Wild Scenes*, not because it was unworthy of publication, but because of the period of depression, which made publishing books and magazines an extremely hazardous undertaking. It must be borne in mind, moreover, that American publishers were very slow to accept any books from native authors, because the lack of international copyright law opened to them the entire field of current English literature without financial obligations to authors. Whenever there was a new book by a popular English writer, the American publishers entered upon a race to get it through the press. "Manfred" was received, printed and published all in one day.¹⁵ As there was little risk in these English books, publishers often refused to take chances on American productions. The Harpers were especially noted for declining to publish works of American authors, and were stubborn in their opposition to the idea of an international copyright.¹⁶

And yet this general attitude of American publishers was not entirely responsible for Harpers' refusal to publish *Wild Scenes* at this time, for the business depression was evident on all sides. *The New-Yorker* maintained that "Perhaps of all the 'producing classes,' the producers of books and periodicals suffer most severely from the unexampled pecuniary revulsion now existing."¹⁷ *Wild Scenes* was published in New York, however, by William H. Colyer in 1843, even after the novelty of stories about sources of the Hudson had somewhat worn

15. Henry B. Fearon, *Sketches of America*, 1818, p. 35.

16. Earl L. Bradsher, "Book Publishers and Publishing," *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, Vol. IV, p. 547.

17. Vol. III, p. 365 (August 26, 1837).

off. The publishing of the book at that time was probably brought about partly by the feeling that there should be an American collection of these stories of native New York, and partly by the popularity of *Greyslaer*, which Harpers had published in 1840.

These stories and essays were popular in England and received several friendly notices in the magazines there. *The Spectator*¹⁸ gave three full columns to comment and quotations. *The Athenæum*, after copying several selections and commenting favorably, made a brief statement on the discovery of the sources of the Hudson River:

Mr. Hoffman started on his adventures in search of the sources of the Hudson. It was not known until the year of grace 1837, and on the publication of the Ordnance Survey, that the mountains whence issues this noble river are among the loftiest in the United States—that the lakes which feed it are equally remarkable for their numbers, their picturesque variety, and wild beauty. Our author was among the first to explore these newly-discovered lands and waters. We cannot, of course, follow him day by day, though his narrative is always pleasant, and the description of his various resting places, log cabins, "dead clearings," and the customs and manners of these out-of-the-world places is fresh and strange to us of the old civilized haunts of men.¹⁹

In a letter to Colonel Aspinwall, dated March 18, 1838, Hoffman mentioned that he had commenced work on a novel in which he planned to take his hero to the Canadian border. This novel, on which Hoffman worked for two full years, was *Greyslaer*. It seems almost certain that he was not officially connected with any magazine, at least in an editorial way, during these two years, and he

18. Volume XII, pp. 184-5 (February 23, 1839).

19. Vol. XII, p. 44 (January 19, 1839).

probably devoted most of his time to this romance. His name does not appear in the New York City directory of 1838 or 1839, although he became a corresponding member of the New York Historical Society on August 13, 1839; and a letter addressed to his sister, Julia, in October, 1840, would seem to indicate that he was living in Piermont²⁰ with his brother George and the old family servant Katy. On March 9, 1839, he wrote Colonel Aspinwall in London, telling him that his novel was coming on slowly, and adding:

The delights of literary vagrancy have in the last 18 months been alternated by so much that was untoward in my circumstances that I can hardly take up my pen with satisfaction again until I am established in a position independent of its exercise, and this is nearly effected.²¹

It is difficult to determine or even surmise what this prospect of independence was. But it perhaps served to give him a feeling of leisure so that he was not pushed to produce his novel before a thorough revision; and if such was the case, it was a great boon, for *Greyslaer* is the most finished of Hoffman's works and received the widest recognition accorded any of his prose productions.

Although Hoffman is generally said to have founded this novel on the famous Beauchamp-Sharp murder case of Kentucky,²² he did not actually make significant use of that tragedy;²³ certainly he made no such important use

20. See letter on pp. 217-18 below.

21. See p. 217 below.

22. See, for example, Arthur Hobson Quinn, "The Early Drama," *The Cambridge History of American Literature*, 1917, Vol. I, p. 225.

23. Hoffman had given an account of this story in *A Winter in the West*, Vol. II, p. 161, and note K, pp. 332-43, and knew it well. T. O. Mabbott thinks it probable that Poe's attention was first called to this

of it as William Gilmore Simms in his novels *Beauchampe* and *Charlemont*.²⁴ Simms carefully gave all the sordid details of this affair, but Hoffman reversed the order and used the kidnapping of the haughty Alida de Roos by her would-be seducer as an opportunity to show her strength of character and determination. Indeed about the only important point of similarity between the Beauchamp-Sharp case and *Greyslaer* is in the kidnapping of the heroine. The proud Alida refused to bow to the will of the villain Bradshawe even after a mock marriage ceremony, which she at the time believed genuine. After the villain had confined her in a cavern for several months he visited her and employed all his powers of persuasion, but "Alida . . . was made of different metal from those whom Bradshawe had often moulded to his purpose."

"Kneel not to me," she cried, "thou base and sordid slave! thou wretched minion of power debauched and misapplied! thou most fitting tool of drunken tyranny! . . . By heaven, Bradshawe, I would rather these rocks should close together and crush me where I stand, or that yon black stream should float my senseless corse to an abyss still lower than that in which your villany has already buried my living frame; I would, I would, rather than bear the name of your wife before men for a single day!"

So saying she unsheathed a poniard which Bradshawe had let fall, and flinging the sheath at his feet proclaimed,

tragedy by either newspaper accounts or Hoffman's treatment in *A Winter in the West (Politian An Unfinished Tragedy)*, by Edgar Allan Poe, ed. T. O. Mabbott, 1923, p. 52).

24. W. P. Trent, *William Gilmore Simms*, 1892, p. 117. In December, 1846, in a fifty-page letter to Rufus W. Griswold (Boston Public Library) Simms said that his tendency to moral and mental analysis led Hoffman to suggest that he "devote a work entirely to the business of working out" his metaphysical vein. See also Trent, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

"Your power over me from this moment has its limit. The instrument of my deliverance is in my own hands; and you can do no more than compel me to use it." ²⁵

The story, however, is mainly concerned, not with the theme of seduction, but with the history of the country along the Mohawk at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. Greyslaer is a zealous young patriot, ardently attached to Alida de Roos, the beautiful daughter of an aged Whig who lives in the valley of the Mohawk. Alida refuses to requite his love because she thinks she has been married to Bradshawe. But Greyslaer persists, and later learns by accident that the marriage ceremony between Alida and Bradshawe was a fraud. Finally, after long imprisonments, bloody battles, and narrow escapes, Greyslaer and Alida are united in marriage at the end of the war.

The characters are portrayed with some degree of skill. They are not merely heroes, heroines and villains, but real men and women with individual characteristics. Greyslaer himself, stern, energetic, ambitious, in spite of his half-supernatural spirit of patriotism, is yet a boy with the romantic love of a boy. The danger in which he finds his sweetheart, his hatred of the villain Bradshawe, and his natural love of freedom, are quite enough to explain the ardor of his partisanship. Bradshawe is overdrawn, perhaps; and yet when we first make his acquaintance we are not prejudiced against him, for he has many of the characteristics of a gentleman. Circumstances and his own moral weakness, however, lead him from one step to another until he finally comes to a tragic end. It is only

25. *Greyslaer*, 1840, Vol. I, pp. 219-20.

by the merest chance that he meets his death at the hands of an Indian, and not at the hands of Greyslaer, who, indeed, has come near realizing his desire for vengeance, and who would have been the assassin had Hoffman kept more closely to the facts of the Beauchamp-Sharp murder case.

Writing of events in which men naturally play the chief parts, Hoffman gives us the picture of only two women: one the heroine and the other a lovely, shy, almost elf-like Indian, "Spreading Dew." Unlike some of Cooper's helpless and decorous women, Alida has the strength of her convictions, is able to look out for herself under trying circumstances as a prisoner in a cave, and is capable of feeling revenge to the point of a resolve to commit murder, although she actually faints when she is confronted with the opportunity of carrying out that revenge.

The character of Balt, the woodsman, is portrayed with less skill than that of any of the others. He is a Natty Bumppo with as much poetry, and as much cunning as Cooper ascribes to that character, and he is clearly a copy of Cooper's hero. Blindly devoted to Greyslaer and unable to understand his philosophy, he yet has, like Natty Bumppo, his own backwoods philosophy:

Their *hums*? And who in all natur wants a better hum nor this? Here are walls that rise straight upward higher than any you see in housen, keeping the wind away, yet letting you step about where you choose without getting out o' doors . . . ; and as for them as wants a fireside, why aint the woods right full of clean hearth-stones and cozy nestling-places? A *hum*? Tormented lightning! is it a soft bed ye want there, lads? Why, isn't yonder mossy tussock as fresh and springy as e'er a pillow your good woman could shake up for ye . . . Lads, lads, I'm ashamed on ye to talk o' housen in a place like this, where the very light from heaven looks

young and new . . . as if it might a' been twinborn with the young Summer this very year—²⁶

With the Indian characters, Joseph Brant and his son Isaac, Hoffman does better. He follows the historical facts relating to these men and reconciles their dual natures by portraying them in actions demanding loyalty and bravery as well as treachery and wanton destruction. Brant at Oriskany, fighting to recover the ancient lands of his people, is a memorable figure.

As a narrator of dramatic events, Hoffman is perhaps at his best in the battle scenes. The whole story of Oriskany field is told vividly. From the moment General Herkimer orders an advance through the narrow defile where Brant is waiting for him, the battle is pictured with all the confusion and carnage of that well-known action. But though the movement of the action in particular passages is well sustained, the plot as a whole is often interrupted by needless moralizing on the part of the author. For example, he follows the account of Oriskany with this meditation:

It is strange how, while most minds grow haughty, exacting, and imperious from success, misfortune, so far from bringing humility with it, produces precisely the same effect in others; they seem to harden in the struggle with sorrow, and grow insolent as they gain knowledge of their own powers of endurance.²⁷

And, again, on the very next page the same moralizing tendency halts the progress of the narrative:

It is well for us that it is only in very early life that we are thus prodigal of our chances of happiness, and willing to concen-

26. *Greyslaer*, 1840, Vol. II, p. 32.

27. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 71.

trate them all upon a single issue. Alas! how soon do we learn, in maturer years, to shift our interest from scheme to scheme; to see wave after wave, upon which the bark of our hopes has been upborne, sink from beneath it, until the very one upon which it was about to float at last triumphantly, strands us upon the returnless shores of the grave!

On the whole the novel made a successful appeal to the reading public of that day. Two editions were printed in New York in 1840, and a third in Philadelphia in 1841. Newspapers and magazines acclaimed it. *The Knickerbocker* prophesied its immediate success and promised an extended notice in the next issue. "It will appear in our next; and although it will doubtless accompany the *fifth* edition of the work to the public," this notice ran,

yet we cannot forbear to place on record a synopsis of its character, and our high estimate of its various merits; although the labor may probably prove a supererogatory one, and the aid we would render it, altogether adscititious.²⁸

In the next issue *The Knickerbocker* gave a summary of the story and asserted that it contained

many scenes of savage life and border warfare, in the graphic descriptions of which, in our judgment, Mr. HOFFMAN is surpassed by few existing novelists. . . . The hunter Balt is sketched in a masterly manner. Like COOPER's Leather-Stocking, his is a bold and striking portrait; but here the resemblances [sic] ceases; for in the humble adherent of 'Greyslaer,' we think we recognize the portrait of JOHN CHENEY, a real character, whose peculiarities are minutely described in Mr. HOFFMAN's "Wild Scenes of the Forest and Prairie."²⁹

28. Vol. XVI, p. 176 (August, 1840).

29. Vol. XVI, p. 267-68 (September, 1840).

Godey's Lady's Book, after giving the setting and main theme of *Greyslaer*, said:

To those who are acquainted with Mr. Hoffman's abilities the mention of these materials will naturally suggest, what is the fact, that *Greyslaer* is an exciting, interesting, and vigorous production, full of graphic description and stirring incidents.³⁰

On July 11 *The New-York Mirror* noticed the appearance of the novel, and praised both book and author:

This book [*Greyslaer*] was laid upon our table just as we were closing this department of our paper. Its author is a gentleman extensively and well-known as a brilliant and agreeable writer, and was for a long time connected with the New-York Press: the *American* and the *Mirror*. In every situation he has occupied, he has displayed peculiar and decided ability; and it will not be indiscreet to add, a fine deportment and warm-hearted amiability of character which have made a friend of all who know him. As strict critics, however, our business is with the merits of the book, and not those of its author, however conspicuous. "*Gryslaer*," [sic] then, is a stirring and spirited border story, founded on the eventful history of the Mohawk Country during the war of the revolution. Many of the characters and incidents are historical, and Mr. Hoffman has connected them skilfully with the fictitious narrative. The sketches of scenery, like all from his pen, are touched with the hand of a master. They may be relied upon, moreover, as possessing as much truth as beauty; for Mr. H. has traversed the whole of the romantic region he describes, and he depicts its features with the spirit of a woodman and the eye of an artist. Mr. H., though still a young man, has long been conspicuous as a popular writer and successful poet; but we have always thought that his *forte* lay in descriptions of scenery, and in this department he is undoubtedly pre-eminent among American writers. The book before us, however, shows a great diversity of talent. It contains some good verses and good dialogue, as well as fine description. As his

30. Vol. XXI, p. 95 (August, 1840).

march is evidently onward, we cordially wish him, what has never yet been realized by literature in this country, an ample reward for his intellectual labours.³¹

Henry T. Tuckerman, in an undated fragment of a letter to Rufus W. Griswold,³² discussed Hoffman in general and *Greyslaer* in particular:

Mr. Hoffman has an eye for natural scenery, by which we do not mean simply a capacity of enjoying it, but a clear perception of its features & cordial estimate of it [sic] peculiarities. With most persons woodland, stream, & cloud leave but vague impressions; & in attempting to convey an adequate idea of any range of country either with the pen or in conversation, they find their memories or descriptive powers quite inadequate to the task. Mr. Hoffman is admirably organized for the appreciation both of scenery & character. There is a vivacity & actuality in his pictures of rural scenes which has scarcely been equalled in this country. Numerous passages from his *Winter in the West* & *Wild Scenes* confirm the truth of our remark; & the author's merit in this regard was very warmly acknowledged upon the appearance of his last publication in the *London Examiner*. As regards the heroes & heroines of his tales, they have both freshness & individuality, & this is enough to render them not only attractive but natural. Balt the hunter is a well-conceived & admirably-sustained character, American in the most genuine sense of the word. *Greyslaer* has so many traits about him which find a response in our consciousness that we cannot but venture the assertion that the original existed elsewhere than in a poet's imagination. We do not refer so much to the habits or manners of the man, as to his idiosyncrasies,—his ways of thinking & feeling. No one who has not reflected upon his emotions & indulged often in self-meditation, can fully recognize the chief interest of *Greyslaer's* character considered as a type of real humanity. Of Mr. Hoffman's minor tales, several are unsurpassed for a certain vigorous truthfulness & rare nationality of tone. "Ben Blower,"

31. Vol. XVIII, p. 23 (July 11, 1840).

32. Griswold MSS. in Boston Public Library.

"The Missionary Bride" & "Rosalie Clare," for instance, are daguerotypes of life in this country, true to nature and at the same time romantic & tasteful, while "The Flying Head" & other imaginative sketches have all the wild interest of German legends, with a higher degree of ideal probability. It is rare to find graphic ability & metaphysical taste united in one individual & their combination in Hoffman seems to indicate that he is of all our writers, the best fitted to depict the scenes of his native land with fidelity & effect, & people them with characters of historical & local interest.

The English reviewers, however, seem to have given little attention to Hoffman's novel. *The Athenæum*, in a brief comment, seemed doubtful of its real worth, and maintained that, although it had much to commend it, it was but a melodrama of wild Indians, and that Max Greyslaer was a feeble copy of Leatherstocking.³³

The many favorable criticisms were of inestimable value in getting the book before the public, but of even more importance in this respect was the dramatization which was presented at the Bowery Theatre August 3, 1840, about one month after the first appearance of the novel itself. *The New-York Evening Post* of that date commented upon the success of the adaptation:

The novel, with its thrilling revolutionary incidents, and powerfully drawn characters, is admirably adapted for stage effect, and we doubt not the play will prove highly interesting and attractive.³⁴

On August 6th, the *Post* proclaimed the fulfillment of this prophecy of popularity:

The new drama founded upon Mr. Hoffman's brilliant novel of Greyslaer, increases in attraction and will be repeated tonight. We

33. Vol. VIII, p. 571 (July 18, 1840).

34. P. 2, col. 5.

wish there were more American plays in which the glorious sentiments that animated the patriots of '76 were illustrated with equal effect. The soul-stirring incidents of the drama, must secure it a long and profitable run.

On Friday, August 7, *The New-York Evening Post* announced the fifth presentation of *Greyslaer* and no mention is made of another play taking its place until *The Honeymoon* is announced in the issue of Tuesday evening, August 11. *Greyslaer* probably ran at least a week—a rather long run for New York at that time.³⁵

This success on the stage undoubtedly meant much to the popularity of the novel, and it is easy to understand why it ran through three editions in one year. It was not till 1849, however, that a fourth edition appeared. This was reviewed in *The Literary World* just after Hoffman's resignation from the editorship of that paper,³⁶ and naturally attention was called to the excellence as well as the popularity of the romance.

Meanwhile Hoffman had been busy with editorial duties. Early in the year 1840, before the appearance of *Greyslaer*, he had assumed additional responsibilities by becoming associate editor of *The New-Yorker* with Horace Greeley, who was at this time dividing his time between New York and Albany and was preparing for the exciting campaign of 1840, when he was editor of *The Log Cabin*, the political organ of the Whigs of that year. Hoffman's arrangement with Greeley was announced on January 18, 1840, to extend over a period of three months; and Greeley, after stating definitely that

35. A. J. Neafie took the part of Joseph Brant according to T. Allston Brown, *A History of the New York Stage*, 1903, Vol. I, p. 118.

36. Vol. III, pp. 944-45 (December 23, 1848).

he himself would be responsible for the political policies of the paper and Hoffman for the literary, said that he hoped to renew the contract at the end of the three months. This contract, however, was not renewed, for the position was filled the last of April by Hoffman's friend, Rufus W. Griswold, who, writing to James T. Fields, said: "I now 'do' *The New Yorker* under a two year's [sic] engagement, in place of Hoffman."³⁷ The reason for Hoffman's failure to renew his contract with Greeley is not evident, but it is very likely that he was busy working on *Greyslaer* and was counting on the fulfillment of the dream that he would be free to pursue his literary interests in his own way. There is no evidence that there had been misunderstanding or disagreement of any kind.

And however diligent with his work on *Greyslaer* and his editing of *The New-Yorker*, Hoffman was not too busy to take part in social functions. Although his slight limp³⁸ made him *hors de combat* for dances, he was generally desired for dinner and card parties. The social feature of the winter of 1839-40 in New York was Mrs. Brevoort's "*bal costume, costume a la riguer*." About five hundred attended this ball, which is said to have afforded the greatest display of costumes ever seen in New York.

Many a beautiful 'point device,' which had cost the fair or gallant wearer infinite pains in the selection and adaptation, was doomed to pass unnoticed in the crowd; and many who went there hoping each to be the star of the evening, found themselves eclipsed by

37. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

38. William Keese, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

some superior luminary, or at best forming a unit in the milky way.³⁹

Hoffman was there, dressed as a friar.⁴⁰

This was probably the happiest period of Hoffman's life. His works had appeared both at home and abroad and had been well received, he was generally admired for his social qualities, his work in the editing of magazines caused him to be regarded as an authority on things of a literary nature, and he had high hopes of becoming so situated financially that he could pursue his ambitions at his own leisure.

39. *The Morning Herald*, Feb. 28, 1840, p. 2, col. 1; this paper gives the date of the ball as February 27, which is evidently correct. Philip Hone gives this date as February 24. *The Morning Herald* of March 2 contains a full account, including even a plan of the rooms at Brevoort Hall. An editorial in the same issue says, "This ball has created a greater sensation in the fashionable world than anything of the kind since the creation of the world, or the fall of beauteous woman, or the first frolic of old Noah, after he left the ark and took to wine drinking."

40. *The Diary of Philip Hone*, ed. by Tuckerman, 1889, Vol. II, p. 14.

CHAPTER VIII

THE POET ASSAILED

After the publication of *Greyslaer*, Hoffman did for a time enjoy leisure in his literary pursuits until the income from that work began to be insufficient for his livelihood. Since he still had the feeling, however, that he wished to be free to write as he chose, without the limitations which magazine work imposed upon him, he accepted a position on May 6, 1841, as third chief clerk in the office of the Surveyor of Customs of the Port of New York, receiving a salary of a thousand dollars a year.¹ This position at first seemed to give no promise of permanence, as his friend Henry T. Tuckerman wrote to James T. Fields, "Charley Hoffman has a nice place in the Custom House. I am sorry it is only temporary."² But Tuckerman must have been mistaken, for Hoffman continued third clerk until January 26, 1843, when he became deputy surveyor at a salary of \$1171.92 per annum. He did not resign this place until July 3, 1844, when he was receiving \$1500 per annum, a very respectable salary for that time.³ *Graham's Magazine* expressed surprise at the fact

1. Information from the manuscript records of the Treasury Department, Official Register of the United States, 1849, Washington, D. C., as supplied by J. E. Harper, Chief, Division of Appointments.

2. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

3. The records of the Treasury Department read "Charles E. Hoffman," but since the New York City directory and the New York Historical Society records, as well as R. W. Griswold's *Gems of American Poetry*, all give Charles F. Hoffman's address at this time as the

that Hoffman was given this position which was usually the reward of a political henchman:

How it happened we could never imagine—since public offices are in these days so invariably the reward of partisan service, and our contributor has as little to do with politics as demagogues have usually to do with letters—but he holds an important position in the Custom House, where he sits, day by day, as patiently as sat Charles Lamb at his desk in the India House.⁴

In view of the number of changes in appointments at the Custom House during the '40's, Hoffman's record of three full years was a long one. His removal, which came about through no fault of his own, but in accordance with the well-established spoils system, followed the appointment of Cornelius Peter Van Ness, former Governor of Vermont, to the collectorship of the Port of New York, to take effect on July 4, 1844. According to *The New-York Evening Post* of July 2, the pressure of applicants for the subordinate positions was almost unprecedented. One year later the same paper berated the Collector of Customs very roundly and accused him of discrimination against good men and good Democrats:

Removals have been made without just cause; removals of men who always performed their duties faithfully and well, not only as revenue officers, but also as members of the democratic party, and yet violent and bitter whigs have been suffered to remain.⁵

Five years after Van Ness's appointment, the *Post*, condemning the removal of a man who had been in the

Custom House, there can be little doubt of his identity. See also the reference to *Graham's Magazine* in footnote 3 below.

4. Vol. XXIV, p. 206 (October, 1843).

5. *The New-York Evening Post*, July 1, 1845, p. 2, col. 4.

Customs Office in Hoffman's time, took occasion to remark that "Mr. Hoffman had things about right there and such of his works as now remain, we think present no room for improvement."⁶

The work in the Custom House seems to have allowed Hoffman some leisure, and the fact that he was not filling an official journalistic position does not mean that his pen was inactive. His first literary interest was the collecting of a number of his scattered poems which had appeared in various newspapers and magazines, and the writing of one long poem, "The Vigil of Faith," the theme for which a later writer thought Hoffman had obtained from *Tokeah, or The White Rose*, the first novel of Charles Sealsfield (Karl Postl).⁷

Hoffman's new volume, to which he gave the title *The Vigil of Faith and Other Poems*,⁸ appeared early in 1842 and was well received, four editions of the work appearing within three years. *The New-York Mirror* had this praise for it:

6. *The New-York Evening Post*, May 7, 1849, p. 2, col. 2.

7. Theodore Stanton, in *A Manual of American Literature*, 1909, p. 144, says that Charles Sealsfield's novel which had appeared in Philadelphia in 1828 furnished Hoffman the motive for this poem. The only possible point of similarity between the poem and the novel, however, is in the death of the bride. In *Tokeah*, an Indian bride is accidentally killed in an attack by Lafitte, the pirate, on the morning after her wedding ceremony. There is, however, neither a motive for jealousy nor anything which has to do with entrance into the spirit world, the two main features of Hoffman's poem. *Tokeah* is a story of a white girl living among the Indians from infancy, under the loving care of the noble chief, Tokeah. Finally, after many vicissitudes she is restored to her own father.

8. The poems beside "The Vigil of Faith" were short occasional poems: "Moonlight on the Hudson," "Town Repinings," "The Bob-OLinkum," "What is Solitude," "Language of Flowers," "Indian Summer," "To an Autumn Rose," and "St. Valentine's Day."

This charming volume is a beautiful tribute of poetical fruits and flowers. It abounds in true and life-like descriptions of scenes and places. . . . The opening poem, from which the book derives its title, (an Indian legend,) is a fine specimen of taste, and skill, and power in narrating and illustrating some of the peculiar and romantic ideas of the wild man of nature.⁹

And although not yet collected, the following criticism, published in *Graham's Magazine* for May, 1842, is from the pen of Edgar Poe.¹⁰

Mr. Charles Fenno Hoffman is well known as the author of several popular novels, and as the quondam editor of the "American Monthly Magazine"; but his poetical abilities have not as yet attracted that attention which is indubitably their due.

"The Vigil of Faith," a poem of fifty-two irregular stanzas, embodies a deeply interesting narrative supposed to be related by an Indian encountered by the author in a hunting excursion amid the Highlands of the Hudson. It bears the impress of the true spirit upon every line; but appears to be carelessly written

The occasional Poems are scarcely more beautiful, but, in general, are more complete and polished. Now and then, however, we observe, even in these, an inaccurate rhythm. Here, for example, in "Moonlight on the Hudson," page 63, we note a foot too much—

"Or cradle-freighted Ganges, the reproach of mothers."

This line is not used as an Alexandrine, but occurs in the body of a stanza. Mr. Hoffman is, also, somewhat too fond of a double rhyme, which, unduly employed, never fails to give a flippant air to a serious poem. It is not improbable that we shall speak more fully of this really beautiful volume hereafter. Its external or mechanical appearance excels that of any book we have seen for a long time.

9. Vol. XX, p. 95, March 19, 1842.

10. Vol. XX, p. 300. Dr. Mabbott is responsible for the attribution of this to Poe. The line quoted is the twenty-eighth of the poem named.

This was the year of Dickens' visit to America, and the famous dinner, at which seven or eight hundred guests were present, was given to him in New York at the City Hotel, on Friday, February 18.¹¹ Although Hoffman was not honored by being asked to respond to a toast at this banquet, he may have been there, and if so, must have gone away with a determination to do even more for international copyright than he had already done. Dickens divided his speech between the praise of Washington Irving as a man and writer and as a literary ambassador helping to link the United States and Europe. Irving, carrying the banner of the American friends of copyright at this dinner, gave this toast: "It is but fair that those who have laurels for their brows should be permitted to *browse* on their laurels."

By personal contact also Dickens¹² may have inspired Hoffman to even greater zeal for copyright. In writing to Griswold on June 28, 1842, Hoffman referred specifically to a discussion of copyright with Dickens:

By the way coming down in the steamboat with Dickens a few weeks since I told him in talking of copyright that he ought to know you—he had heard of Graham's Magazine. I said you had hold of it & were coming out for copyright & that he ought to

11. *The New-York Tribune*, Saturday, February 19, 1842, p. 2, cols. 1-4, Dickens' toast was: "The Literature of America: She well knows how to do honor to her own Literature and to that of other lands, when she chooses WASHINGTON IRVING for her representative in the Country of Cervantes."

12. There were some who maintained that Dickens did not help the cause of copyright. F.W.X.Y.Z.S., in an open letter addressed to Dickens published in *The New World*, Vol. VIII, pp. 5-7 (January 6, 1844), said: "But your want of delicacy was especially shown in your method to promote the cause of copyright, which was beginning to find many advocates, and to make headway by its own strength, when your arrogant conduct knocked the whole matter, (at least for the present,) in the head."

read your Preface "to the Poets." He had not heard of the book though he had of Keese's of which he spoke favorably.¹³

Although the year 1842 saw Hoffman peacefully at work in the Customs Office and producing only one long poem, it was a momentous period for him. Several of his songs, which later became very popular, were published in this little volume. But what was even more important was the fact that Rufus W. Griswold published his first edition of *The Poets and Poetry of America*, which contained more poems by Hoffman than by any other writer. Many of these should have been omitted from such an anthology; but Griswold, following his personal tastes, published practically all he could find from Hoffman's pen.¹⁴

Griswold's book was received by an enthusiastic press. For example, *The Knickerbocker* asserted that no one was "so well fitted by his studies and his tastes for precisely such a work as this, as the Rev. RUFUS W. GRISWOLD,"¹⁵ and called the book "by far the most satisfactory and in every way the best collection of American poetry that has ever been made."¹⁶ The reviewer admits,

13. See below, p. 224.

14. This was quite in contrast to Bryant's *Selections from the American Poets* which appeared in 1840 and contained only one poem, "Indian Summer," by Hoffman (p. 240). *The New-Yorker* (Vol. X, p. 209, December 19, 1840), showed surprise at this seeming neglect of Hoffman. In the review of Bryant's book, *The New-Yorker* selected only three poems, and Hoffman's was one of the three.

15. Vol. XIX, pp. 584-85 (June, 1842).

16. In 1847 there appeared in Philadelphia an anonymous satire entitled *Poets and Poetry of America* in which the "Immortal Griswold" is apostrophized:

Immortal GRISWOLD! thine the deathless name
Shall bear the palm of more than mortal fame!
For thine the lofty boast at once to save

however, that although very few good poems have been omitted, "a severer judgment and a taste which paid more close regard to the strict demands of Art might have been less liberal." *The New-York Tribune* of March 2, also favorable, noticed the book in the same column with Hoffman's "The Vigil of Faith." The demand for Griswold's book necessitated the appearance of a second edition in 1843, which, like that of 1842, had forty-five poetic selections from Hoffman.¹⁷ *The North American Review* in a leading article of thirty-nine pages on *The Poets and Poetry of America* merely mentions Hoffman, but grants him high praise: "There are few songs, if we except those of Burns and Moore, which have more lyric flow and hearty sentiment than the best of Hoffman's."¹⁸

But trouble was brewing abroad. In spite of Park Benjamin's rejoicing¹⁹ that there was a happier feeling existing in England in regard to literary America than there had formerly been,²⁰ *The Quarterly Review* for January, 1844, launched an unmerciful attack against Griswold's second edition, and finally singled out Hoff-

The humble bard perchance from hapless grave,
Weave with his crown thy fadeless laurel bays,
And with thy nursling gain undying praise.

Blest be thy name! nor grief thy pleasure-mar,
Nor fade thy life but with the morning star!

17. While the 1845 edition also contained forty-five of Hoffman's poems, the 1850 and 1852 editions contained only 36 selections from Hoffman, and the 1873 edition, only 30 selections.

18. Vol. LVIII, p. 5 (January, 1844).

19. *The New World*, Vol. II, p. 78 (January 30, 1841).

20. Hoffman had written for the *New-York American* on July 20, 1830 (fourteen years before), a full column against the manner in which English journals berated America, and the general attitude had improved since that time.

man as being the worst of all the American poets of the day. The tone of the whole article is evident from the opening paragraph:

'AMERICAN Poetry' always reminds us of the advertisements in the newspapers, headed 'The best Substitute for Silver:'—if it be not the genuine thing, it 'looks just as handsome, and is miles out of sight cheaper.' . . . To believe themselves, they are the finest poets in the whole world: before we close this article we hope to satisfy the reader that, with two or three exceptions, there is not a poet of mark in the whole Union.²¹

The reviewer allows some merit to Emerson, Halleck, Bryant, and Longfellow, but he makes so many slurring remarks about even these poets that the value of the praise is lost. "Mr. Emerson," he says, "was formerly a Unitarian minister, but he embraced the Quaker interpretation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and threw up his church." He admits that Fitz-Greene Halleck has written some fairly good poetry but adds that it will not detract from his claims by "inquiring to what extent Mr. Halleck is indebted to the study of well-known models." A comment on William Cullen Bryant is that "Nature made him a poet, and the accident of birth has placed him amongst the forests of America." "Only one name now remains," he says, "that of the most accomplished of the brotherhood, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. But we have some doubts whether he can be fairly considered an indigenous specimen. His mind was educated in Europe."

But the reviewer seems to have reserved his largest bottle of vitriol to throw on Hoffman:

21. Vol. XXXII, p. 291 (January, 1844).

It is reserved for Charles Fenno Hoffman to distance all plagiarists of ancient and modern times in the enormity and openness of his thefts. "No American," says Mr. Griswold, "is comparable to him as a song-writer." We are not surprised at the fact, considering the magnitude of his obligations to Moore. Hoffman is Moore hocused for the American market. His songs are *rifacimientos*. The turns of the melody, the flooding of the images, the scintillating conceits—are all Moore! Sometimes he steals his very words. One song begins, 'Blame not the bowl'—a hint taken from 'Blame not the bard': another 'One bumper yet, gallants, at parting!' Hoffman is like a hand-organ—a single touch sets him off—he wants only the key note, and he plays away as long as his wind lasts. The resemblance, when it runs into whole lines and verses, is more like a parody than a simple plagiarism. One specimen will be ample.

'Tis in moments like this, when each bosom
 With its highest-toned feeling is warm,
 Like the music that's said from the ocean
 To rise in the gathering storm,
 That her image around us should hover,
 Whose name, though our lips ne'er reveal,
 We may breathe through the foam of a bumper,
 As we drink to the myrtle and steel.

He had Moore's measure ringing in his ear, and demanding a simile in the middle of the first quatrain—hence the music from the ocean. The third and fourth lines are an echo of a sound without the smallest particle of meaning or application in them.²² They constitute the means, nevertheless, by which Hoffman hocuses the Americans. Drop them out altogether, and, so far as the sense is concerned, the song would be materially improved."²³

22. In *The Echo*, p. 22, Hoffman explains this figure: "In Pascagoula Bay strange music is heard when certain winds prevail. Naturalists attribute the phenomenon to the vibration of the 'horns' of catfish, which at such time congregate in large schools."

23. Volume XXXII, pp. 322-23 (January, 1844).

When Hoffman read the first part of this article, reprinted in *The New World*, he was greatly amused, as is shown in a letter to Griswold:

Sat Jan 27 44

My dear Griswold,

I was just roaring over an article in the Foreign Quarterly upon "The Poets and Poetry" when I recd. your melancholy letter. I pray you turn to that paper at once & it will put you in good humor. Jno. Bullism in perfection is to me always the most amusing thing in the world—My bump of benevolence is unfortunately so great that fond as I am of the grotesque human absurdity more often awakens compassion than fun in me. I feel greater pity than diversity at Don Quixotes troubles, but the fanatical conceit of a real Sancho Panzaic Englishman is to me always delicious. I have only as yet read the first part of the article as copied ("to be concluded") into the *New World*. Bryant tells me that I get a more savage mauling than any one else in the article—I plagiarise it seems from Tom Moore!—A devilish good fellow to steal from—Shows my taste—I wonder they don't appreciate him more in that way at home—Hope the article will bring Moore into notice there. . . .

But you must read the article, 'tis the best advertisement of your Book yet out; for the fellow abuses the country so roundly that the people roused to a discriminating ire must at last take the poets under their protection as a part of themselves—Here's a remark that will show you the fellows frantic stupidity—"This journal failed, & Freneau went to Sea in command of a Merchant vessel; *qualification being as little required in commanding an American vessel as in writing American poetry!*" Ah, my reverend friend, our corners are rubbed off so in this country by habitual attrition with emigrants from every nation that we should not judge these redoubtable islanders too harshly.—²⁴

24. See pp. 234-36 below.

The article excited widespread comment²⁵ and was thought by some to have been written by Dickens.²⁶ Lowell, in a letter to Edgar Allan Poe, six months after the appearance of the review, said concerning its authorship:

I agree with you that the article . . . was fair enough as far as the conclusions the author came to were concerned—though at the same time I think him as ignorant in poetical matters as a man can well be—in short ignorant to the full to be a Reviewer. But you are mistaken as to the authorship of it. It was not (I am quite sure) written by Dickens, but by a friend of his named *Forster* (or *Foster*)—the author of a book named “*Statesmen of the Time of Cromwell*.”²⁷ Dickens may have given him hints. Forster is a friend of some of the Longfellow clique here which perhaps accounts for his putting L. at the top of our Parnassus.²⁸

But when Hoffman read the last installment of the article and saw for himself to what extent the reviewer had gone, his first feeling was that he should defend himself against such an unjust attack. He was perfectly willing to accept adverse criticism in so far as it concerned his literary ability alone. Some of his articles had been unfavorably criticized already and more had been damned

25. *The North American Review* (Vol. LIX, pp. 1-44, July, 1844) gave a forty-four page answer to this article under the title “The Morals, Manners, and Poetry of England.” The opening sentence, typical of the whole, begins, “The earliest notices we have of Britain represent it as fruitful in barbarians, tin, and lead. It has continued so ever since.”

26. H. J. Raymond in a letter to R. W. Griswold, October 21, 1842 (MS. in Boston Public Library) also indicated his belief that the review was written by Dickens.

27. This was John Forster, Esq., whose *Lives of Eminent British Statesmen* was published in 1839, in seven volumes. The sixth and seventh volumes are devoted to Cromwell. He also wrote the lives of Landor, Dickens, Goldsmith and Swift.

28. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 151. The letter is dated June 27, 1844.

by faint praise, but this was an entirely different matter. He would let the public decide whether or not he was guilty of theft. He did not take into consideration the fact that *The Quarterly Review* had consistently had an inimical attitude toward anything American, being even more hostile than *The Edinburgh Review*, and that "hardly any other journal save *The Anti-Jacobin Review* was so deliberately and dirtily bitter in its attacks."²⁹

All foreign reviews of this collection of Griswold's were not, however, in this vein. *The Dublin University Magazine* in August, 1843, for example, speaks of Hoffman as popular abroad as well as in America :

Charles Fenno Hoffman is known at this side of the Atlantic as the author of "Greyslaer," "Winter in the West," and "Wild Scenes in the Forest and the Prairie,"—but is one of the most popular of song writers in America. He is a true disciple of Christopher North in his sporting propensities, and one of his wild feats cost him a leg, and nearly his life. We are half inclined to like the fellow better than the whole Yankee crew of them. There shows through his dashing numbers an *aristocracy* of soul and sentiment, pleasing from its rareness. A wave of the cavalier's feather shows so gaily among the round-head multitude, that we hail the wearer as nearer our old world sympathies by a "gentlemanlike distance."³⁰

Yet the general paternalistic attitude of most of the British reviewers shows their prejudice, their lack of sympathy, their inability to understand American conditions, and a certain offensive condescension. There was indeed some truth in British strictures on America; but this hostile attitude made the Americans very sensitive and

29. W. B. Cairns, *British Criticisms of American Writings, 1783-1815*, 1918, p. 23.

30. Vol. XXII, p. 239.

ready to accept even just criticism in an unfriendly manner.

Now that Hoffman's character was assailed, he determined to appear in his own defense. The obvious method was to issue a complete edition of his poems and let the public decide whether or not they were "Moore hocused up for the American trade." Accordingly he brought out *The Echo, or Borrowed Notes for Home Circulation* in a cheap form that would allow the book to be sold for twenty-five cents and so be within the reach of every one.³¹ As a foreword to *The Echo* he introduced a letter to Griswold, written from New York on February 22, 1844:

My dear Sir:

You may remember some three or four years since having asked me for a list of the various signatures under which my anonymous verses had appeared in different American periodicals during the last twenty years. You are perhaps aware, also, of the disparaging remarks which your free and flattering use, in "The Poetry of America," of the verses thus patiently collected by you, has called out in some quarters. I have often regretted that I permitted those effusions (most of which had long since answered the casual purpose for which they were written) to be thus exhumed: regretted it, not from any particular sensibility to the critical dicta by which

31. In a letter to Griswold (see p. 247 below) Hoffman emphasized the importance of a cheap edition when he refused to allow the expense of a portrait. "Make that edition as small as you please," he said, "but let it go farther as a plain collection of verses put together originally for the purpose mentioned in the preface & that purpose only—List what Shines you please with the book afterwards to make it pay for itself."

Later Hoffman learned from Tuckerman that this edition of *The Echo* had been both troublesome and expensive to Griswold, and he conceived the idea of making an attractive edition for the Christmas trade to help make the book "pay for itself." The plan was to remove the "Preface" and supply as a substitute an inscription in verse, and to use some illustrations which had appeared previously in various magazines. (See letter of September 24, 1844, pp. 252-53 below.)

they have been assailed; but simply because, like many a sanguine yet indolent person originally conscious of rather vivid poetic aspirations, I had, from my boyhood upward, from early manhood onward, "lived along in the hope of doing something or other" in the way of a poem that my countrymen would not unwillingly let live: and because (while thus probably much over-rating poetical powers in reserve) I was unwilling that these fugitive pieces should fix a character upon my writings it might be difficult to supersede by any subsequent effort in a higher order of composition. That fanciful regret, if not abated, has, with the considerations from which it sprung, been swallowed up lately by a reality which I deem of more imperious moment than anything affecting mere *literary* reputation.

One of those British reviews, which, in the absence of an international copyright, do the thinking of this country upon literary matters, and which, you know, are circulated so widely and are of such authority here that it is idle for an American author to refuse to plead to any indictment they may prefer, has recently done me the honor, amid a confused mass of indiscriminate accusations against my countrymen at large, to select me specially and individually for the odious charge of gross and hitherto unheard-of literary dishonesty.

Now, my dear sir, while it is due to you to relieve you from all responsibility as godfather of these questionable effusions, by publishing them under my own name,—this is likewise the only way by which so sweeping and damnatory a charge can be fully met, without involving myself in egotistical explanations far worse than those I am furnishing here, because they would be endless. I have therefore, as the question is one of *character*, and not of mere literary taste, collected all the pieces by which I have attempted "to hocus the Americans," that I could lay my hands upon; and though the unconscious imposition has been running on so long that many may have escaped me, yet there are enough of all kinds for the present purpose; which is to give that portion of the abused public who feel any interest in the matter, an opportunity of deciding (not whether it is good poetry—for that is not the question—but) whether they have really been taken in so much after

all: whether or not the affecting predicament of the amiable Parisian who spoke *prose* for so many years without knowing it, has found a whimsical counterpart in the unconscious use of the *poetry* of others by the writer of these effusions: or whether, finally, they do sometimes—however rarely—(to borrow the language of my friendly reviewer) “possess the property described in the mocking birds—a solitary note of their own.”

I am, dear sir, your friend and servant,

C. F. HOFFMANN.

New York, *February* 22d, 1844.

[The examples given by the reviewer to prove his charge *perhaps* shake his position, and *possibly* they do not. He is certainly mistaken about the similarity of “measure,” as any one may verify by counting the feet in the different songs mentioned. As for their identity of thought with those delicious things of Moore’s upon which the ingenious reviewer insists they are modelled, any “American” who feels a curiosity to ascertain how far he has been “hocused,” may determined for himself by referring to “Moore’s Melodies”—a work not wholly unknown in this country.—H.] ³²

When the book appeared late in 1844, it drew from *Graham’s Magazine* ³³ a severe criticism of Hoffman’s enemies and commendation of Hoffman’s judgment in issuing this volume as an answer to the charges made against him:

Those who understand the motives of the *clique* of reviewers from which the precious article in question emanated, would never think of reposing any confidence in what they wrote of the United States, and would scrutinize as severely those statements which they made as facts as those which they made as opinions. In every thing relating to American institutions and literature, they have

32. Introduction to *The Echo*, Philadelphia, 1844, pp. 3-4. The brackets are Hoffman’s.

33. Vol. XXV, p. 294 (December, 1844).

displayed as great an independence of the rules of just criticism as the maxims of courtesy, honor and truth. The article on the American poets is made up of lies and blunders. Mr. Hoffman, in his preface, simply denies the charges against himself, and leaves his readers to judge from the poems themselves whether the allegations of the reviewers are substantiated. We have not the least doubt that the decision will be in his favor.

This review no doubt answers the whole question of his plagiarism. That Hoffman knew and admired Moore is true; he admitted it in his letter to Griswold immediately after reading the first part of the article. Eleven years before, in the last number of *The Knickerbocker* which he had edited, there appeared this favorable estimate of Moore, in a review written in all probability by Hoffman himself:

It is a glad reflection, that while the great lights of the world are going out, unsucceeded, one by one, there still survives in unimpaired and unwasted strength, one of the brightest of that phalanx of immortals, who have shed an undying lustre on their age and country.³⁴

The next month the *New-York American*³⁵ printed a comment on "The Feast of Shells." This article is marked with the well-known asterisk and quotes one of Moore's "least read poems." It would seem from this that Hoffman was thoroughly familiar with Moore and admired him. Hoffman was unconsciously influenced by rhythm and other qualities of style, just as one is easily led by a prolonged study of any author to an unintentional imitation of his peculiar style. But to persevere in the conten-

34. Vol. I, p. 188 (March, 1833).

35. April 12, 1833, p. 2, col. 4.

tion that this similarity was plagiarism was a course of impious stubbornness.

No doubt the greatest weight should be given to Hoffman's declaration that he was unconscious of any similarity between his work and Moore's. In this connection, it deserves to be noted that he refused to allow his poems, "Raise the Heart" and "The Declaration" to appear on the ground that only the phraseology was his own, the ideas being borrowed.

John Keese, who in 1839 had already published a gift book, entitled *Poets of America Illustrated by one of her Painters*, in which Hoffman was given a small niche, gives a remarkably clear picture of the character of Hoffman, in a letter to Griswold. This letter quotes from a conversation with Hoffman, who, of course, never dreamed that what he had said to Keese would be passed on in this manner:

New York, June 19, 1841.

My dear Griswold:—

. . . Our friend Hoffman has felt as nervous as the Devil ever since you told him that that precious piece of "biography" was to go into a book. He is anxious that you should cool it down at least fifty degrees of Fahrenheit before you print it there. The fact is, Hoffman has desired me to become his biographer for you and at his suggestion. I [am to] say that he was never distinguished for anything either at school or college except for swimming further, diving deeper, and coming up dryer than his comrades. To be sure he has had masters for every accomplishment under God's Heaven, but he never mastered one except that in which a duck and a spaniel beat him. Would it not be well therefore to eschew all sorts of flourish? Charley says his father was four times as distinguished at five and twenty as he shall ever be with all our kind aid—yet he is now forgotten save by the few gray beards who remember him as the friend and sometimes the rival of Hamilton.

It seems mockery therefore to build anything upon this thin foundation of particulars to eke out your pages. I can supply you as well as H. (who feels sensitive, rather ridiculously so) upon this point. He has no European associations or connections to stock that same page of glory as our friend B. has.³⁶

His family, though German in their origin (they sprouted from Martin Hoffman, a Lutheran Clergyman who immigrated into the Province of the Knickerbockers about 1670), soon lost all identity with the Fatherland by intermarrying at first with the Dutch and subsequently with the Huguenots and early English settlers. He himself, though, prides himself no little upon having New England blood in his veins, his maternal Grandfather being John Fenno of Boston, the original proprietor and editor of the old Federal United States Gazette. I mention this because I have often heard Hoffman say that he felt a sort of pride in being an American through and through. . . .

Will you allow me to quote from a brief note? . . . "But for God's sake make no flourish—keep the aroma of puff for those whose nostrils it regales. I am," he continues, "unaffectedly gratified that my scribblings should be thought worth exhuming and reclaiming. But that pleasure, I tell you truly, was much circumscribed by Mr. Griswold's ultra praise. In the way of business I have no objection to a book of mine being puffed until the publisher is content. But praise of one man is a different thing, and his poetry,—the tears of his heart—the blood of it, sometimes, is a part of himself." So much for Greyslaer's feelings. . . .

He wishes you to omit in your volume "Raise the Heart" and "The Declaration,"—the phraseology of those above being his, the thoughts belong to others. . . .

Truly and gratefully yours,

JOHN KEESE³⁷

36. Probably referring to William H. Burleigh, descended on both sides from "stern old Puritan stock," being a lineal descendant on his mother's side of Governor Bradford. He has ten selections in Griswold's anthology.

37. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

Fortunately Hoffman had friends, such as Griswold,³⁸ Keese and Tuckerman,³⁹ to stand by him in this trouble.⁴⁰ Edgar Allan Poe remained essentially loyal at this time, although from his point of view plagiarism was a serious literary offense, even though he himself was not entirely innocent of it. In his account of the *literati*, Poe admits the similarity of Hoffman and Moore⁴¹ and regrets Griswold's lack of discrimination in giving Hoffman more space than any two, or perhaps three, of our other poets

38. Griswold and Hoffman remained friends for some years. In 1844 Hoffman kept insisting that Griswold leave the "muggy" air of Philadelphia and join him at Brooklyn where a sea breeze night and morning refreshed one. In a letter to Griswold dated May 27 (see p. 240 below) Hoffman expressed the wish that Griswold could join him and their mutual friend Francis D. Janvier. Unfortunately Griswold could not come and Janvier moved to Philadelphia before the summer was over.

39. Henry T. Tuckerman, Keese, and Hoffman seem to have been very close friends at this time. In letters to Griswold, Tuckerman intimates their relationship: on October 17, he said, "I will give your message to Hoffman. He and Keese are well"; on December 7, "Hoffman and Keese were with me last evening—both well"; on December 30, "Hoffman showed me your letter." These references and Hoffman's generally acknowledged geniality lead to inference that Hoffman is referred to in Tuckerman's letter of June 24 of the same year: "Our ever-cheerful friend handed me a letter from your good self to read." (All these letters are in the Griswold Manuscript Collection of the Boston Public Library.)

40. Among other friends of Hoffman at this time was the artist and poet, Christopher P. Cranch. Early in October, 1841, Hoffman visited Cranch at Fishkill during the brief three weeks that elapsed from the time Cranch met his future wife and the time they became formally engaged. In writing of this visit Cranch said: "Day before yesterday came Charles F. Hoffman and spent yesterday with us, a writer and poet of a good deal of merit. I found him a highly agreeable man, of fine mind and fine powers of conversation." Precisely two years after this formal engagement, October 10, 1843, Cranch and Elizabeth De Windt were married, and Hoffman acted as "groomsman." (Leonora Cranch Scott, *The Life and Letters of Christopher Pearse Cranch*, 1917, pp. 75 and 84.)

41. *Godey's Lady's Book*, Vol. XXXIII, p. 157 (October, 1846).

combined; but he never questions the integrity of Hoffman's character. Part of his concluding paragraph shows his admiration:

The character of no man is more universally esteemed and admired than that of the subject of this memoir. He has a host of friends, and it is quite impossible that he should have an enemy in the world. He is chivalric to a fault, enthusiastic, frank without discourtesy, an ardent admirer of the beautiful, a gentleman of *the best* school—a gentleman by birth, by education, and by instinct. His manners are graceful and winning in the extreme—quiet, affable and dignified, yet cordial and *dégagés*. He converses much, earnestly, accurately and well. In person he is remarkably handsome. He is about five feet ten in height, somewhat stoutly made. His countenance is a noble one—a full index of the character.

Bayard Taylor expressed an equally enthusiastic estimate of Hoffman's popularity shortly after his arrival in New York: "indeed, I find that he [Hoffman] has as many friends as any man in New York, and every one who knows him admires him. I esteem it very fortunate for me that I am connected with him, however slightly." ⁴²

And finally there is this tribute to the character of Hoffman in an anonymous letter published in *Graham's Magazine*: ⁴³

The following most graphic and truthful description of Hoffman is from a private letter addressed by a common friend of our contributor and ourselves to a gentleman in Boston, and being shown to us during a recent visit in that city, we obtained permission to print it in this connection. It is one of the cleverest pieces

42. *Life and Letters of Bayard Taylor*, ed. by Marie Hansen-Taylor and Horace E. Scudder, 1884, Vol. I, p. 112.

43. Vol. XXIV, pp. 206-7 (October, 1843).

of character-writing we have seen in a long time, and will make our readers as familiar with the *man* as they already are with the author.

"So you want to know all about C.F.H.? Well, I'll try to give you an idea of him, while, all unconscious of my limning, he is sitting at the receipt of customs, remitting certain duties, but not one I'll be bound, claimed by 'fair woman or brave man.' I must premise, however, that you'll be sadly disappointed. It is evident from your letter, that the *author*, and not the *man*, is the prominent idea in your mind. From sympathizing in the vein of my friend's verses and enjoying his graphic descriptions of scenery, you have amused yourself by drawing an intellectual portrait, the fidelity of which you would have me acknowledge. Now, grieved as I am to mar your complacency, I shall do no such thing, for the very outline of your sketch is unjust to the original. He is not one to be so 'perked up.' It would be, indeed, a 'golden sorrow' to him to wear even a laurel crown. He is not one of your one-sided, self-absorbed beings who manage to thrust an incidental attribute between their manhood and the world. No; he pretends to nothing but humanity. He is content to be a man, and you can pay him no more equivocal compliment than by betraying any witless consciousness of his pen-craft. A lance would be quite as native to his hand as that little instrument of a tribe 'whose badge is sufferance.' He hath as cordial a preference for the living tree over the 'dead wood of the deck' as Elia himself. No lines (not even Moore's) are more to his fancy than the angler's. The rustling of forest leaves is quite as beguiling to him as that of quartos; and the beaming of a woman's eye far more winsome than the light of science. You have mistaken your man, my good friend. He looks not on life through the spectacles of an author, but according to the dictates of sympathy. His relish for nature, to one accustomed to observe character, gives a key to many other traits. It is a disposition usually found in combination with frankness and a certain noble enthusiasm of character. Whoever takes true delight in the outward world, and passes not unheeded the picturesque oak-clump or the sunny upland—whoever follows, with a glance of interest, the spring-bird's flight, or echoes with plaintive whistle

his autumnal note, will generally be found superior to selfish art and conventional thralldom. Some recent phrenologist recognized an organ of rural taste. It must be large in Hoffman. Mark the pleasant detail with which his sketches of travel abound. Whether at the sources of the Hudson, in the far West, on lake or prairie, amid woodland or moor, observe how he dwells upon every feature and makes you see the verdant knoll and tangled brushwood—scent the crushed pine-leaves as you tramp the forest, and hear the plash of the startled deer as he gains the water. The beauties of the North River have found no more ardent chronicler, and a more cheerful loiterer never dreamed upon its banks. Were he monarch of the Empire state, like the Goth of old, he would choose a last resting-place in the bed of that noble stream. I confess it is delightful to me to find an American capable of genuine local attachment. The author of "Greyslaer" was evidently inspired by the scene of his story; and the same Knickerbocker instinct doubtless led him, during the past winter, to rescue, in an able lecture, the memory of Jacob Leisler—one of New York's bravest and most calumniated patriots—from unmerited forgetfulness. It is this sympathy for native subjects which rendered "A Winter in the Far West" and "Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie" so acceptable in England. They not only give true pictures, but are, for the most part, written *con amore*. Many of the peculiarities of our landscape and border life are mirrored with remarkable fidelity in their pages. It is always charming to be with an earnest companion—one whose heart is in his work. This is the true secret of successful authorship. Without it there can be no glow or life-like touches; and, for one, give me Charles Lamb to muse with over old English authors and actors—Bryant as an interpreter in the meditative air of twilight, when the 'Evening Wind' arises, and the lone 'Waterfowl' skims along the horizon—Byron and Rogers for *cicerones* in Italy; but, to cheer my way and guide my eye in a morning walk by my native groves and streamlets, I ask no more genial comrade than Hoffman.

I have read no more illuminating account of the character of that author than this anonymous writer gives.

CHAPTER IX

NATIONALISM AND POETRY

In 1843 Hoffman had become a corresponding member of the New York Historical Society and was soon displaying the enthusiasm which might be expected of one so proud of his New York ancestry. At the public meeting of December 5, 1843, he read a paper on "The Character of the People of Early New York." It was brief, but by definite illustration and example emphasized the independent character of the early New Yorkers. It discussed their relations with the Indians, their attitude toward slavery, their politics and their domestic life, and finally contrasted past with present New York. The early inhabitants, says Hoffman, "seem to me to have been full as respectable in their day, on the score of *character*, as we claim to be in ours, on the score of mere *intellectuality*."¹ Hoffman was a New Yorker of New Yorkers in spite of his travels. He loved his state and his city as much as his horse and his gun, and he was always eager to see that his state received any honor due it; and John W. Francis justly emphasized Hoffman's indignation² because the renown of New York's early leaders depended so entirely upon the records made by New England historians.³

1. *New York Historical Society, Proceedings for 1843*, pp. 95-106. The quotation is found on p. 106.

2. John W. Francis, *Old New York*, 1858, p. 7.

3. Hoffman in his address before the Saint Nicholas Society of New York, on December 6, 1847, said, in speaking of Jacob Leisler and

At this time Jared Sparks was working on a second edition of his *American Biography*, and there can be but little doubt that this address by Hoffman led Sparks to ask him to write the life of Jacob Leisler for the edition which appeared the next year.⁴ With commendable discrimination, Hoffman, because of lack of important biographical data, confines himself to "The Administration of Jacob Leisler" and makes no pretense of supplying a complete life. Suggesting the theme he developed four years later, in *The Pioneers of New York*, he showed that the spirit of liberty demonstrated by Leisler could be associated with neither the early influence of the "Pilgrim Spirit" of Massachusetts nor the love of liberty of the "cavaliers" of the South; there was, he charged, too great a tendency to make "every ray of our political light emanate, in the first instance, from Plymouth Rock and Bunker Hill."

No doubt Hoffman's enthusiasm for his subject was partly inspired by the fact that he himself was a descendant of Leisler, but it is not clear that he allowed his loyalty to distort the facts. He pictured Leisler as a true lover of freedom on two occasions before the event which brought about his death. On the first of these occasions Leisler is shown as preferring imprisonment to bail when he and some friends are unjustly accused by Gover-

Jacob Milbourne, "Strange, most strange is it, that the story of these memorable worthies of New-York, so wholly, so peculiarly her own, should come up on the page of two leading New England historians, to prove that they are not worth remembering, or if worth remembering, that they acted under a Puritanic influence." *The Pioneers of New York*, 1848, p. 52. The two historians are Hutchinson and Bancroft.

4. Herbert B. Adams, *The Life and Writings of Jared Sparks*, 1893, Vol. II, p. 206.

nor Andros. On the second he purchases the freedom of a family of French Huguenots landed poverty-stricken on Manhattan Island and about to be sold into slavery to pay their ship charges. With numerous references to the authority of books and manuscripts, Hoffman then relates the whole development of the crisis which brought about the signing of Leisler's and Milbourne's death warrants by the drunken Governor Sloughter. The reader is likely to gain the impression from this straightforward and effective account that Hoffman's purpose has not been so much to exonerate Leisler as to arrive at the truth on a point which has been obscure not only to the general public but even to historians.

Hoffman's participation in the activities of the historical society involved him a little later in somewhat less dignified proceedings. On March 4, 1845, the society appointed him, with Henry R. Schoolcraft and David Dudley Field, a member of a committee on the selection of a national name. It would have been difficult to find three men better fitted to compose such a committee. Schoolcraft, a native New Yorker, had spent the last twenty years in studying the Indians. He had traveled throughout the country and was well known both at home and abroad through his book. He had just completed his report on Indian antiquities to the Royal Society of Denmark, of which he was an honorary member. He had also published some verse, none too creditable. Field was a well-known and respected attorney of New York, who was already at work on his *New York Code*, later adopted with necessary local changes by twenty-three states and territories. He had traveled abroad, and upon his return had written *Sketches over the Sea*. With Hoff-

man as the third member, the committee might have seemed quite capable of wrestling with the weighty matter entrusted to its care.

At all events the committee reported on March 31, 1845, and immediately the country was aroused. They maintained that the selection of a new name was imperative from both a poetical and political standpoint, there being two Americas and several countries in the Americas which bore the same name as the United States. And then there was difficulty in one's calling himself a "United Stateser." For this country they suggested the name Allemania (pronounced Almania) as coming from the "grandest and most useful natural features common to the whole country and as restoring to the country one of the primordial titles of the aborigines." They asked the coöperation of societies, teachers and authors in creating a public opinion which should bring about an appeal to Congress for the change of name to the Republic of Allemania.⁵ The report of the committee was generally agreed upon as more than acceptable. The poets particularly liked it. Those who had traveled and found difficulty in expressing the name of the country in which they lived, were likewise enthusiastic in behalf of the report. The Massachusetts Historical Society appointed a like committee with John Quincy Adams as chairman,⁶ but no definite action resulted. The press took up the argument both for and against the proposed name.

The Evening Gazette, after devoting two and a half columns on the front page to the discussion of this report

5. *Proceedings of New York Historical Society*, 1845, pp. 115-24.

6. *The Evening Gazette*, May 7, 1845, p. 2, col. 1.

on April 2, continued the next day its arguments against any change. It refuted the statement of the Committee that the Allegheny Mountains were the center of the United States, asserting that the annexation of Texas had moved the Western frontier. This paper put forward facetiously the "name suggested by Samuel L. Mitchell, M.D., LL.D., M.C., A.S.S., etc., etc., 'Fredonia,' or 'Freedon,' " and to prove the poetic value of this name the writer offered some couplets:

The woods and plains of famed Ansonia
Are far surpassed in fair Fredonia;

or

So wise an act could ne'er be done
In any land but this of Fredon;

or

No land so good as Fredon
To scatter grain and seed on;

or

The graceful nymphs of Fredon
Surpass all Belles we read on.

On the other hand *The Boston Journal*, as quoted in *The Evening Gazette*, supported the idea of a national name but was not sure that "Alleghania" was the best one to be found:

We need a name which will convey a *meaning* when mentioned in the hearing of foreigners, and not require a column of round-about-explanation. . . . Now "Yankee Doodle" is a very good distinctive appellation. It conveys a meaning. The New York Historical Society are in favor of Alleghania—and a portion of the press have taken up the cudgels in their behalf. Well, we are not

particular. Let it be Alleghania or Yankee Doodle—but let us have a *National Name*.⁷

*The New-York Evening Post*⁸ published a sonnet by Henry T. Tuckerman which had already appeared in *The Democratic Review*:

ALLEGHANIA

Worthy the patriot's thought and poet's lyre,
This second baptism of our native earth,
To consecrate anew her manhood's fire,
By a true watchword all of mountain-birth;
For to the hills has Freedom ever clung,
And their proud name should designate the free;
That when its echoes through the land are rung,
Her children's breasts may warm to liberty!

My country! In the van of nations thou
Art call'd to raise Truth's lonely banner high;
'Tis fit a noble title grace thy brow,
Born of thy race, beneath thy matchless sky,
And Alps and Appenines resign their fame,
When thrills the world's deep heart with Alleghania's name!

David Dudley Field made a public reply to those who had attacked the committee.⁹

For two months the battle was waged, with such men as Van Buren, Chancellor Kent, and Harmanus Bleecker against the change, and Irving and others supporting it. Finally the climax came at the meeting of the New York Historical Society, as reported so vividly in *The Evening Gazette* of May 14. The President found it difficult to

7. *The Evening Gazette*, April 11, 1845, p. 2, col. 4.

8. April 30, 1845, p. 2, col. 2; this sonnet also appears in *The Evening Gazette* of May 1, 1845.

9. *The New-York Evening Post*, May 1, 1845, p. 2, col. 4.

keep order. After a great deal of confusion, Hoffman arose and declared, on behalf of the committee, that

they never dreamed of changing the Political name of "the United States of America." That, for himself, as a member of that Committee, he could not sit there and hear the real object of that report so misrepresented. . . . The committee aimed only at calling attention of the Society to a deficiency in nomenclature which is every day felt. . . . They had reported the 'Land of Alleghan,' or 'Alleghania,' as a phrase to be used only for our country generally, as the term 'New England' is now used to designate a portion of that country, (etc., etc.)

"But the Pickwickian zeal of General Tallmadge, . . ." the writer of the same account continues, "bore down all before it, . . . In fact, we thought at one time the committee would hardly escape without impeachment from these indignant United Statesrs."

Thus the work of the committee had gone for nothing but empty discussion. The idea of a national name had been discarded, and travelers in foreign countries still find difficulty in designating their native land. The effect on Hoffman seems to have been negligible, and probably he decided to close the whole subject with a poem of two-thirds of a column in *The Evening Gazette* of May 17. Only the opening and closing lines are of interest:

The Alleghanian Ambuscade

[Sprung in the N. Y. Historical Society, May 13, 1845.]

They'll have no expletive, no alias they,
But while they strangle "Allegania,"
They fight for "Saxendom," in blindness some,
And some more shrewd for Carlyle's "Yankeedom";

Leaving the name at which *The Globe* grew pale
To point a moral or adorn a tale.

* * * * *

But now the Monks¹⁰ retire to pray,
And sing, "God save America!"
And if more of the *word* than the *spirit* be there,
John Jones shield the country from song and from prayer!
For "*American arms*" they're invoking a blessing,
Which may only procure us a Mexican dressing.¹¹

Meantime, during his years in the Custom House, Hoffman had been contributing to various magazines. *Graham's Magazine* especially took pride in naming him, from 1842 to 1848, as a contributor along with Bryant, Cooper, Dana, Paulding, Longfellow, Neal, and Lowell. Even though he apparently wrote nothing for that magazine after 1845, he continued for three years to be announced as one of the principal contributors.

The work at the Customs House had not broken his contact with his literary acquaintances; on the other hand it had given him some leisure and so had made it possible for him to keep his name before the public in a literary way. Accordingly, when a new paper appeared on March 3, 1845, it was not strange that Hoffman should have been included on its editorial staff. This new paper was *The Evening Gazette*, which introduced itself by emphasizing its impersonality and love for truth:

A new candidate presents itself in the ranks of Journalism, under the name of "The Evening Gazette." It is humble in its pretensions and in its price, but high in its aims, and—is it presumptuous to say?—in its hopes. It will be impersonal, but not

10. Meaning the members of the Committee.

11. A clever reference to the fact that "American" refers to Mexico as well as to the United States.

irresponsible—its impersonality arising not from any wish to avoid scrutiny, but from the conviction that the names of its Editors and Proprietors could add no force to Truth, and should not endorse Falsehood. It is the undertaking of young, working and hopeful men, who mean to make the paper worth the price that is asked for it, if diligence, varied endeavor, and honest purposes can effect that result. . . . "The Evening Gazette" will be published at no. 47 William, near Wall-street.¹²

It was in this paper that Hoffman's "Monterey" first appeared, on November 13, 1846. This poem, "which enjoyed the distinction of being admired by the 'Iron Duke,' " ¹³ was widely known and praised throughout this country. Like most of Hoffman's poetry, it appeared without any signature, but of course its popularity soon caused its author to be discovered.

At no time does the paper print the name of Hoffman as an editor, but his connection is established through letters to Griswold,¹⁴ in one of which Hoffman states that he wished to copy an article of Griswold's in the *Gazette*, but finding it was one of a series, did not do it. In another letter, Hoffman says that he is sending a copy of the *Gazette* to Griswold so that he will find his opinion of Scott as given in a review written by him. This review appears in *The Evening Gazette* of June 9, 1845. Several poems and articles in this paper bear Hoffman's initials, but that fact alone would not establish any definite connection. The paper was exceptionally fortunate in its early success and soon began the publication of a semi-weekly, in addition to its daily issue. The issue of June

12. This was the residence of Charles Fenno Hoffman at this time as given in *The New-York City Directory for 1846 and 1847*, p. 191.

13. J. G. Wilson, *Bryant, and His Friends*, 1886, p. 409.

14. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, pages 154 and 189.

7, 1845, gives a prospectus of this semi-weekly, signed by William G. King, asserting that

The paper will remain, as heretofore, under the editorial charge of the undersigned, with the assistance of the experienced pen, to whose efforts the Gazette is already greatly indebted for the favor with which it has been received by the public.

This reference to "the experienced pen" is no doubt to Hoffman. A statement of June 9 would seem to confirm this theory:

We hasten to correct a misapprehension which, as we learn, has been occasioned by the following paragraph in our annunciation of the Semi-Weekly Gazette:

"The Gazette will remain, as heretofore, under the editorial charge of the undersigned, *with the assistance of the experienced pen to whose efforts the Gazette* is already greatly indebted for the favor," etc. etc.

The passage in italics has been taken to refer to the Editor of the late New York American. This is altogether an error. That gentleman's arrangement with the Courier & Enquirer makes it alike his duty and his interest to devote himself exclusively to that paper, and we need not say to those who know him, that he is not likely to fall short in such an engagement. It is not very probable that anything in the existence, or conduct of our humble sheet, can effect the prospects of our triumphant morning contemporary. Nevertheless, this explanation is due to it. We have also the further motive for making it, that we are not willing to see diverted from its true object the compliment we meant to pay, as our readers will feel it to be well deserved, to the valued contributor to whom we did allude, and whom we trust hereafter to announce as permanently connected with the Gazette.

The fact that Hoffman's essay, "The Inconvenience of Being Invisible," was printed in the issue of March 7, 1845, would seem to indicate that his connection with the

Gazette dated from its inception. Then there are the "Sketches of the Local History of New York,"—dealing with the Stamp Act Insurrection of 1765, which may possibly have been written by Hoffman, but which are not signed.¹⁵ There are numerous unsigned poems, but it is impossible to identify these as Hoffman's, even though the titles suggest themes in which he was interested. He does, however, sign a few articles; for example, one from *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine* for November, 1845, on "The Poetry of Trade or Sunbeams from Cucumbers," which appears in the two issues of November 1 and 3.

Late in the year 1845 Hoffman received what promised to be a very attractive appointment. H. W. Hewet conceived the idea of issuing an expensive, highly illustrated weekly newspaper, called *Hewet's Excelsior and New York Illustrated Times*, and asked Hoffman to assume its editorship. Hoffman accepted and at once set about to secure contributors. Although the first number is dated January 1, 1846, it appeared ahead of time, for its first issue was noticed in *The Evening Gazette* of December 24; its early publication was evidently a business move to make the most of the Christmas trade. The magazine contained in its sixteen pages fiction, poetry, music, reviews, and a section on drama. Contributions to the first number included a sonnet by Henry T. Tuckerman; "The Captive," by James Russell Lowell; "The Ruined Mill," by Mrs. Emma C. Embury; "The Women of the Mayflower," by Mrs. Elizabeth Oakes Smith; a song with music score, "Encompass'd in an Angel's Frame," with

15. The only reason for attributing these to Hoffman is that he was especially interested in New York history and that he was certainly contributing to the paper about this time.

words by General Burgoyne; and "Vondel: A Tale of Old Manhattan," by the editor. *The Evening Gazette* of December 24 praised both the appearance and quality of the *Excelsior*:

The *Excelsior*, the most superb of all illustrated weeklies is at last upon our table; and in spite of the height of our expectations we are more than satisfied. It is beautiful and desirable in every way. The stirring and graphic pen of its editor—which our readers must with us, sadly miss in the *Gazette*,—furnishes, beside editorial and critical matter, a new tale which promises much even for him; and his extensive literary connections have been laid under contribution for articles upon every subject which could be fitly introduced into such a work.

The illustrations are many, finished and spirited, doing the highest credit to both artist and engraver; and these with the beautiful typography, fine paper and appropriate shape of the *Excelsior*, make it the most taking as well as the most splendid pictorial paper in the country. We have authority for saying that the next number will be still finer.

The first installment of "Vondel" gave fair promise of success for, having its setting in the Manhattan of the 1680's, it offered Hoffman the opportunity of calling upon his knowledge of pioneer life. Unfortunately *Hewet's Excelsior* met the ill fate of numerous periodicals of the day, and Hoffman's "Vondel" was probably never finished. Hewet, because of financial reverses, was forced in February to announce that he had been compelled to suspend the publication of the magazine.¹⁶ The comment on "Excelsior No. 3," however, in *The Evening Gazette*,¹⁷ shows that Hoffman's tale was being well re-

16. *The Evening Gazette*, February 23, 1846, p. 2, col. 1.

17. January 29, 1846, p. 2, col. 1.

ceived.¹⁸ After commenting favorably upon the illustrations, the *Gazette* said,

But the feature which most attracts us in the *Excelsior*, and particularly in this number, is the marked character and high tone of the articles. . . . There is raciness, freshness, meaning in all of them. . . .

The article on American Authorship, and the Tale by the Editor, the Poem so full of truthful ideality, by Tuckerman . . . will bear us out in what we have said.

Hoffman's editorial ambitions had again met with defeat and he evidently returned to his post on the *Gazette*. When *The Evening Gazette* was consolidated with *The Times* on March 2, 1846, under the title of *The Gazette & Times*, Hoffman continued his connection.

But while working on the *Gazette* and *Hewet's Excelsior*, he had been collecting some of the shorter love poems which had seen the light in various newspapers and magazines during the previous fifteen years. Some of these had appeared in Griswold's *The Poets and Poetry of America* and others in *The Vigil of Faith*¹⁹ and *The Echo*, but a number of them were not to be found in either of these collections. Hoffman conceived the idea of making an anthology of thirty of these sonnets and love

18. I have been able to discover only Volume I, Number I, of *Hewet's Excelsior*.

19. The fourth edition of *The Vigil of Faith and other Poems* appeared in 1845. In a letter to Griswold, March 6, 1845 (Boston Public Library) Hoffman compared the "Vigil" to Goldsmith's "Traveler": "Goldsmith's 'Traveller' it is said in its six first editions was altered every time by the author. 'The Vigil' may be said to resemble it in one point at least—that of the writer's frequent emendations." (See p. 256 below.) On April 8 of the same year Tuckerman wrote to Griswold saying: "I hope you are going on with the new edition for C. F. H. Otherwise he will be much disappointed. I suppose his revised 'Vigil' has reached you. The notes greatly improve it." (MS. in Boston Public Library.)

poems for the thirty days of the month, each poem representing a day and showing some change of attitude on the part of the lovers. Some of these pieces had been printed in the *New-York American* and others in *Graham's Magazine*.

The one for the 18th day of the month had appeared in *Graham's* for April, 1844,²⁰ with music score, the music being composed by Giorgio Romani. The volume, entitled *Love's Calendar, Lays of the Hudson, and other Poems*, was published by D. Appleton and Company late in 1847 in time for the Christmas trade.

The book was received with mild favor by the press, but in spite of the title piece, it failed to call forth the enthusiastic response that had been so evident at the appearance of *Greyslaer*. Hoffman's reputation, it is clear, did not gain a great deal, in spite of such praise as was given by *The Southern Literary Messenger*:

. . . *Poems* they are, though blushing under the modest title of "Songs." Poetry, because they disclose their parentage from that faithful, earnest, truly-conservative spirit. . . . The poet, chanting his vesper-song to the memory of high-souled men and vanished years, is here. What thrilling pleasure does he enjoy when thus gazing on the face of Nature in her loveliest, wildest moods! . . . Here life has seen its pure imaginings more than realized, and the poet becomes somewhat alive to the promptings of that spirit which blends both nature and truth in its clearest manifestations, with religious energy and the love of his country and kind. . . .

He has mirrored the high traits of character and native nobleness of spirit which marked our aborigines, and has given *voice* to his inner promptings of reverence for the nature so triumphant even in its degradation, a nature whose more prominent character-

20. Vol. XXIV, pp. 188-89.

istics are but invigorated even by the ruin of her chosen children. . . .

But it is *The Vigil of Faith*, a legend of the Adirondach [sic] mountains" that affords the best scope for our appreciation of these poems. It is pure, simple in conception, and energetic in tone—taken altogether the most polished and elegant of Mr. Hoffman's poems, it yields to none of our best productions, either in imagery or correctness of rhythm.²¹

The Literary World, now under Hoffman's editorship, wisely refused any comments of its own, but copied, about two weeks before the appearance of the article in *The Southern Literary Messenger*, some friendly comment from *The Churchman* for January:

Mr. Hoffman is confessedly the first lyrical writer we have, and although pre-eminently successful in themes of sentiment and gallantry, is almost equally at home in the woods and on the waves, with the Indian or hunter, at the social board or alone in the forest.

. . . With the exception of Mr. Bryant, Hoffman is the only poetic editor we can, at present, call to mind. Since the days when Campbell edited the *New Monthly*, and Dana, before him, the *North American Review*, poetry and criticism have not often gone hand in hand together; fancy and critical judgment have not been met in union. In his hands the *Literary World* has acquired a keen and manly advocate of New York history and biography, with a strong leaning towards American history in general, and a faithful interpreter of Indian character and habits, mythology, and manners.

Than this tasteful little volume, there could hardly be a more appropriate gift at the present season; and especially here, in New York, where the author is universally known, admired, and beloved.²²

The collection of poems deserves comment. It seems to be the volume of Hoffman's verse that stands most

21. Vol. XIV, pp. 99 and 101 (February, 1848).

22. Vol. II, p. 593 (January 15, 1848).

prominently for the poet at the present time.²³ *The Vigil of Faith* had appeared in 1842, but several poems written subsequent to that edition were included in this last volume. Hoffman's strength as a poet lay in his love of, and devotion to, nature.

"The Vigil of Faith" is a story of Indian revenge which could not have been written by one who had not the spirit of adventure and perhaps some insight into the nature of the Indian. The scene is laid among the Adirondack Mountains, where the hero of the poem, Kachesco, befriends the poet and tells him over the evening camp-fire the story of his love. Kachesco had loved in youth a beautiful maiden to whom he finally became betrothed just before he departed on a long hunting trip. While on this trip he was wounded and sent word to his sweetheart by one of his companions. He proved false and instead of giving the message tried to woo the girl for himself. At length, the wounded Kachesco returned home and was informed of the treachery practiced upon him. On the wedding morning as the bride was being brought to the marriage altar, the false friend sprang forth and stabbed her. Kachesco took the right of an avenger and cut off the brave's forelock, but did not kill him. Thenceforth Kachesco's one aim in life was to keep his rival living so that he might not continue his courtship of the girl in the spirit land. He did not inflict the death penalty on this murderer because he obeyed the words of his sweetheart as spoken to him in a vision:

23. At public auction in 1922 it brought \$8.50, which is more than any other of Hoffman's works sold at auction has brought. (*American Book Prices Current*, 1923, Vol. XXIX, p. 406.)

If yet thou wilt not with me go,
Keep him—Oh keep but him away.

The treacherous friend sought death at the hands of Kachesco, who, however, always remained true to the task and, having established his supremacy over the wretch by means of mesmerism, preyed upon him so unrelentingly that he degenerated into a broken-spirited thrall.

This story is told with directness and yet with a spirit of tenderness possible only to one who could appreciate the power of love and suffering, of devotion and constancy, qualities too frequently ignored by those dealing with Indian themes. Hoffman closed his poem with the Indian's creed of another life and a vision of the "blissful Islands of the West," where the Indian "knows" his sweetheart is watching to see her lover's boat approach the spirit land.

Descriptive pieces such as "To the Hudson River," "Moonlight on the Hudson," and "The Streamlet" are full of elegant pictures; and his "Forest Musings" expresses his pleasure at viewing a birchen bark or a pine tree, or hearing the "joyous yet tender" song of the bobolink. There is no overcoloring, and little sentimentality, but rather a delicacy and gallantry of sentiment. But it is true that his picture of the Indian is one-sided, since he emphasizes only the noble traits of his characters. And it is clear that he cannot be regarded as having made any notable contribution to our knowledge of Indian mythology.

"Sparkling and Bright," "Rosalie Clare," and "The Boat Song" were very popular during Hoffman's lifetime, and deservedly so. "Sparkling and Bright" with its

carefree air and reckless gayety was especially appealing to fun-loving college boys. There is a marked similarity, however, between these poems and those of Waller, Moore and Byron. "To a Waxen Rose," beginning "Go, mocking flower," is admittedly a parody on Waller's "Go, Lovely Rose." "The Morning Hymn," beginning "Let there be light," seems quite similar to Byron's "God said let there be light." "Room, Boys, Room" has much the same tone of sentiment as Morris's "Over the Mountains," and several of the poems in "Love's Calendar" are after the manner of other poets. But here the similarity ends; it is one thing to be of the school of Tom Moore, for example, and quite another to be a copyist of Tom Moore. Hoffman was certainly not the latter. He was generally considered to be one of the best song writers of his time, and yet it must be admitted that his songs lack the feeling of warmth and generosity so characteristic of his poems on nature and Indian themes.

Upon the publication of the edition of Hoffman's poems in 1873, Bryant expressed to the editor, Mr. Edward Fenno Hoffman of Philadelphia, his appreciation of Hoffman's poetry as a "moral and intellectual image" of the author:

I congratulate you on the completion of the task which you have undertaken of collecting the poetical productions of your uncle, Charles Fenno Hoffman, whom, while he lived in New York, I was proud to reckon among my friends, and whose kindly and generous temper and genial manners won the attachment of all who knew him. His poems bear the impress of his noble character. They are the thoughts of a man of eminent poetic sensibilities, who delights to sing of whatever moves the human heart—the domestic affections, patriotic reminiscences, the traditions of ancient loves and wars, and the ties of nature and friendship. These

thoughts are expressed in musical versification with the embellishments of a ready fancy. The friends of your uncle have reason to thank you for presenting them in this manner the moral and intellectual image of him whom they have had such reason to esteem.²⁴

On the publication of this collection there appeared a favorable notice in *The Saturday Review* (London) :

A man must have both manliness and the insight of tenderness if he is to penetrate, as these have done [speaking of Hoffman and Cooper], the secrets of the Indian nature, and appreciate the power of loving and suffering, of devotion and self-devotion, which is often disguised under stolid pride or disfigured by savage ferocity.²⁵

While Hoffman had been engaged in collecting his love poems and "Lays of the Hudson," he had also been editing *The Literary World*, which had been established by E. A. Duyckinck, February 6, 1847. Duyckinck severed his connection with the appearance of the thirteenth issue on May 1, 1847,²⁶ and Hoffman took charge with

24. Letter in preface of *The Poems of Charles Fenno Hoffman, Collected and Edited by his Nephew, Edward Fenno Hoffman*, 1873, pp. 10-11.

25. *The Saturday Review*, Vol. 37, p. 536 (April 25, 1874).

26. The seventeenth number of *The Literary World* (Vol. I, p. 399, May 29, 1847) says, concerning Duyckinck's withdrawal as editor: "The attention of the proprietors of this journal has been called to a statement in several papers, to the effect that the retirement of Mr. Duyckinck from the editorial department of 'The Literary World,' was induced by an unjustifiable attempt on their part to interfere with the independent expression of his literary opinions in these columns. The distance from New York where the journals are published containing this charge, is presumptive evidence that it grew out of erroneous information. They therefore deem it merely necessary to deny the charge as wholly unfounded in truth, and refer to the late editor to verify this denial." *The New York Evening Post* (May 29, 1847, p. 2, col. 2) copies the above from the seventeenth number of *The Literary World*.

Brownson's Quarterly Review (N. S., Vol. I, p. 385, July, 1847), says:

the issue of May 8 and conducted the magazine for seventeen months with his usual skill. *The New-York Evening Post* greeted Hoffman's accession to the editorship thus:

C. F. Hoffman is announced as the future editor of *The Literary World*. Mr. Hoffman is so well known to the public as a writer that we scarcely need say that we are sure that the work in his hands will be conducted with taste and ability.²⁷

During this year and a half *The Literary World* prospered. Shortly after Hoffman became editor, *The Gazette & Times* of July 31 proclaimed the success of this venture, and attributed it to Hoffman's efforts.²⁸ The articles are indeed generally of a very high excellence; and Hoffman's essays and reviews seem to be more numerous than in any of the other publications he had edited.

In addition to his editorial responsibilities, Hoffman was as usual busy with all the multifarious duties that

"We perceive, by the announcement in the fifteenth number, that the journal has passed into the hands of a new editor, Mr. Charles F. Hoffman, of New York." *The Literary World*, however, carries this announcement in the fourteenth as well as in the fifteenth number. *The Review* continues: "We know little ourselves of Mr. Hoffman, having never to our knowledge read any of his writings, his works not coming particularly within our department; but he holds a very respectable rank among our popular authors, and we hear him spoken of as a man of ability, learning, and fine literary taste. We have no reason to suppose the journal will not gain rather than lose in spirit, interest, and usefulness by its change of editors, although Mr. Hoffman's predecessor was an editor whose place is not easily made good."

27. May 6, 1847, p. 2, col. 1.

28. On July 12, 1847, Henry T. Tuckerman said in a letter to Griswold, "Hoffman is well and still in the Gazette." (Manuscript in Boston Public Library.) He was probably profiting by his previous experience with *Hewet's Excelsior* and holding his position with the *Gazette* until the success of *The Literary World* seemed less problematical.

belong to any prominent citizen. His interest in the history and development of New York, his literary attainments, his personal manners, and his ability as a speaker all combined to make him a man of prominence. Accordingly, it is not surprising to find him, late in 1848, addressing the Saint Nicholas Society of New York, on the character of the early settlers of the State.²⁹

This address, later printed under the title of *The Pioneers of New York*, emphasizes the importance of the rich historic background of the old colony in a not unscholarly way. Realizing that the predominance of the English race in America has made the people of New York, as well as of other states, forget the claims of other nations, Hoffman, without diminishing the glory of the English, proceeds to show not only that the contributions made by the early settlers of New Netherland are important but that their "laws, usages, rights and liberties sprung from their own people." He deplors the fact that Bancroft and other authors of school books, which are "written almost exclusively by New England men," presume to call the arrival of the Pilgrims at Plymouth the "opening" of this continent, and "to ascribe the introduction of freedom, religion, and civilization to the same Puritanic origin."

He then points out the voyage of Hendrick Hudson, the explorations of five Dutch ships in 1614, and the exports of New Netherland prior to the arrival of the

29. The title-page of this address, *The Pioneers of New York*, 1848, published by Stanford and Swords, gives the date as December 6, as does also the reprint of the address in 1912, but the *Charter, Constitution, By-Laws, and Lists of Members of the Saint Nicholas Society*, 1913, page 15, gives the date of Hoffman's address as December 2 (at the Tabernacle), and the anniversary meeting as December 6, at the City Hotel.

Mayflower in 1620. Admitting that the Puritans more eagerly fostered learning and literature than did the Dutch, he shows that New York, then as now, turned her attention to commerce and business, and allowed religious and civil rights and privileges so far beyond those of New England that many fled from New England to New Netherland for the sake of liberty.³⁰ Hoffman says:

It was a brave spirit, that of old Puritanism, and I yield to none in honoring its undaunted antagonism to older forms of despotism over the rights of conscience—but it was not less a despotism? It was an adventurous spirit, that of old Puritanism, and I honor it not less for its self-martyrdom of exile, than for its unflinching grapple with the dogmas of its enemies. But I will *not* recognize its ferocious intolerance in forcing its own dogmas upon Quakers and Anabaptists in this land, as proving that it offered a true priesthood for the altars of freedom! I will *not* recognize that its blind uses of power have proved aught to the world in THE SCIENCE OF LIBERTY—aught save the mental vigor and conscientious hardihood of its stern asserters of narrow doctrine.³¹

By definite example and reference to works of such men as Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan, John Romeyn Brodhead, Gouverneur Morris, George Bancroft, Cadwallader Colden and Henry R. Schoolcraft, Hoffman deals with the subject in a clear and logical manner, and finally in a forceful peroration makes an appeal to the "Brothers of Saint Nicholas" to remember that the "lifting

30. "The historian De Laet says, in speaking of this period of the history of New Netherland, 'numbers, nay, whole towns, to escape from the insupportable government of New England, removed to New Netherland to enjoy that liberty denied them by their own countrymen.'" (P. 26.)

31. *The Pioneers of New York*, 1848, p. 36.

eagle of New York . . . which still bears 'Excelsior' in his beak, was fledged on his own soil—he never began his soarings from Plymouth Rock." Hoffman, like James Fenimore Cooper and Edgar Allan Poe, affords indubitable evidence that the revolt against New England so prominent in our own day had already begun.³²

It is perhaps a not insignificant glimpse of the times that one obtains through the *Commercial Advertiser's* account of the arrival of the guests in costume and of the "excellent band" which "was in attendance":

Charles T. [sic] Hoffman, Esq. delivered the annual address to this society last evening, at the Tabernacle, before a numerous and gratified audience. Chief Justice Jones presided. Ancient Dutch costume was in vogue for the hour, and produced a striking contrast with the more modern, perhaps not more comfortable or convenient attire. Mr. Hoffman's address was received with much applause. He gave a graphic history of olden times, and in a pleasant vein commented upon some of the more characteristic events attending the settlement of the colony. An excellent band was in attendance. The society celebrate their annual dinner on Monday evening.³³

On October 7, 1848, after having had no connection with *The Literary World* for over seventeen months, E. A. Duyckinck returned with his brother, G. L. Duyckinck, and the two assumed the editorial responsibilities. In announcing the change in the management, the

32. When this address was reprinted by the Saint Nicholas Society in 1912, Mr. Stuyvesant Fish, in presenting a copy to Robert H. Kelby for the New York Historical Society, gave it as his opinion that "what Mr. Hoffman said about history being written in, by and for New England, is just as true today as it was two generations ago." (Letter, dated April 15, 1912, appended to title page of 1912 reprint in New York Historical Society Library.)

33. December 3, 1847, p. 2, col. 3.

Duyckincks were careful to let it be known that Hoffman had promised to contribute to the end of the year. Hoffman did contribute throughout those three months, producing a lengthy essay every week. Several articles by him under the general heading of "Sketches of Society" appeared after his resignation had been announced.

CHAPTER X

LAST DAYS

Hoffman's achievement in fiction, essays, and journalism about the years 1839-40, had proved that he was able to carry on several projects at the same time. This was equally true of the period of 1847-48, for while he was editing *The Literary World* and collecting the poems for "Love's Calendar," he was working on another novel, a historical romance.

But the *Red Spur of the Ramapo*, as this new story was to have been called, was never printed. Its appearance was vainly awaited by the public that had so thoroughly enjoyed *Greyslaer*. Holden's *Dollar Magazine*¹ of December, 1848, records that "among literary announcements of the month we find a notice of a new novel by Hoffman, the author of *Greyslaer*." *The Boston Evening Transcript* in an article entitled "Mishaps of Authors," copied from *The Hartford Courant*, tells this story of its non-appearance:

Two or three years ago, as we learn from the indefatigable Holden, the announcement was made in the literary world, that a new historical romance from the pen of C. F. Hoffman, would soon appear, to be entitled "Red Spur of the Ramapo." As it never *has* appeared, many hungry expectants for it may not have heard of the reason of its being kept back. It may certainly be laid down among the mishaps of authors.

1. Vol. II, p. 764.

Mr. Hoffman had been at work with unusual care for the six months previous on his romance, and an eminent book publishing firm had contracted with him for the copyright. It had got to the ears of the reading public, and expectation was on the *qui vive* for its appearance. The author, according to his custom, placed the manuscript sheets in a large portfolio by the side of his writing-table to prevent their straying away. Happening one day to take a look into his literary safe, he discovered, much to his astonishment and trepidation, that there were not more than half a dozen sheets of MS in it. His feelings cannot perhaps be even imagined. His long labors had come to nought. But his manner of submitting to his loss puts him, in that matter, by the side of Newton, in the time of his tribulation.

Mr. Hoffman called to the chamber-maid, who had taken care of his room, and said:

—"Mary, have you ever taken any papers from this place?"

—"Sure I have sir!" replied she, with innocent frankness.

—"For what purpose have you taken them, Mary?" said the author.

—"Sure, sir, to kindle the fire and I thought you were very good to put them there!" said Mary.

—"And pray Mary, how long have you been in the habit of taking papers out of here?"

—"All the winter, sure;" said the innocent Mary, "but I didn't think there was any good to them for they were scribbled all over."

—"Ah, Mary!" exclaimed the ruined author, "do you know that you have done me an irreparable injury?"

—"A reparable injury!" said Mary, "what's that? Sure, but I am very sorry, sir."

—"And so am I," said the author; but he said nothing more. (Hartford Courant) ²

The stoic manner in which Hoffman received this news from the maid who had burnt the manuscript was char-

2. January 1, 1849, p. 4, col. 2.

acteristic of the man, but underneath the outward show of composure the disappointment must have been bitter. He had doubtless hoped to make this novel his masterpiece, but now the little that was left of the work, made it seem unwise to attempt to complete it. He probably realized that if he were to rewrite it, it would lack the fire and spirit of a first production. At any rate, whatever the reasons may have been, he seems to have accepted his loss as final.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that this catastrophe was one of the causes of the crisis which was soon to follow in Hoffman's life. His work on *The Literary World* was drawing to a close, but yet he felt obliged to write a long weekly essay in order to fulfill his contract with the Duyckincks. His prospects were now negligible. The members of the literary profession were generally paid almost nothing. Even men like Bryant and Irving enjoyed scarcely enough financial return on their writings alone to insure them a high standard of living. Bryant had to rely on his newspaper work, and Irving, after his return from ambassadorial service in 1848, seriously considered reëntering the law.

His disappointment over the fate of the *Red Spur of the Ramapo*, the memory of the accusation of plagiarism from Thomas Moore, the resignation from *The Literary World*, the hard work involved in producing a finished essay each week for that paper and in preparing at the same time occasional lectures,³ and the lack of prospects for the future, must all have contributed to the sum of

3. *The Pioneers of New York*, 1848, was a lecture delivered before St. Nicholas Society of New York, December 6, 1847.

Hoffman's worries.⁴ His health began to fail and his mind gave way under the excessive strain so that he was compelled to place himself under the care of a specialist. This he did on January 22, 1849,⁵ and as early as February 28, 1849, James T. Fields expressed his concern to Griswold: "How sad is poor Hoffman's fate. Write me the cause, don't fail, by return of mail."⁶ And on April 5, 1849, Herman Melville, in something of a prophetic tone, wrote to Duyckinck:

Poor Hoffman. . . . This going mad of a friend or acquaintance comes straight home to every man who feels his soul in him, which but few men do. For in all of us lodges the same fuel to light the same fire. And he who has never felt, momentarily, what madness is has but a mouthful of brains. What sort of sensation permanent madness is may be very well imagined just as we imagine how we felt when we were infants, tho' we can not recall it. In both conditions we are irresponsible and riot like gods without fear of fate—It is the climax of a wild night of revelry when the blood has been transmuted into brandy—But if we prate much of this, why we shall be illustrating our own proposition. . . .

Would that a man could do something and then say It is finished—not that one thing only, but all others—that he has reached his uttermost and can never exceed it. But live and push—tho' we put one leg forward ten miles is no reason the other must lag behind—no, that must again distance the other—and so we go till we get cramp and die. . . .

H. MELVILLE⁷

4. William Keese, *John Keese, Wit and Littérateur*, 1883, p. 43, says "there were those who said that a woman's falsehood was the cause of the malady," but there is accessible to me no evidence bearing out this belief.

5. Information from the records of the Pennsylvania Hospital, 4401 Market Street, Philadelphia, furnished by Mr. E. M. Green, Superintendent, to the author.

6. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

7. *Some Personal Letters of Herman Melville*, ed. by Meade Minnigerode, 1922, p. 8.

A change for the better followed his treatment and *The New-York Tribune* of April 21, 1849, rejoiced that Hoffman was improving and would soon be able to resume his place in the literary world:

C. F. HOFFMAN, whose health had become impaired by too close confinement and incessant application to literary labors, being threatened with a serious affection of the brain, sometime since very judiciously determined to place himself in a position where, with sufficient seclusion, entire avoidance of literary pursuits, and judicious medical treatment, he was likely most speedily and certainly to be restored to his wonted good health. Under these circumstances, he very wisely availed himself of the professional advice and attention of a physician familiar with the protean forms of nervous disease, and distinguished for his success in their treatment—Dr. Kirkbride of Pennsylvania,—and we are happy in having the assurance of this eminent gentleman that Mr. Hoffman's health is now almost entirely retrieved, and that his friends may expect soon again to welcome him among them. We are confident that it will afford a real gratification to his literary friends to learn that at no period of his indisposition have Mr. Hoffman's symptoms been such as to justify the remarks, kindly intended, as they no doubt were, which appeared in some of the public prints. He has never been so ill as to be unable to see his friends, nor to prevent his engaging, at his own discretion, in all the rural exercises for which his fondness is well known, and which continues unabated.⁸

Hoffman seems to have recovered his entire faculties as the *Tribune* predicted. On April 25 he was discharged from Kirkbride's as cured. In *The Literary World* of June 16 is a letter from a Washington correspondent:

Washington, June 2d, 1849.

I perceive, with much satisfaction, evidences of a general disposition on the part of General Taylor and his Cabinet to recog-

8. *The New-York Tribune*, April 21, 1849, p. 2, col. 3.

nize the claims of men of letters and talents to appointments for public office. This evidence is not confined to a single department, but appears to characterize the acts of the Secretaries. Among these appointments nothing could have given greater satisfaction than the appointment of Mr. Charles Fenno Hoffman to a post in the Consular bureau of the State department, an office into which he was this morning inducted. Mr. Hoffman's reputation as a literary, political, and imaginative writer, is not, indeed, confined to this continent. Several of his works have been reprinted in England, and you must be gratified to learn that your predecessor as Editor of the *Literary World*, is placed in a position in which his enlarged views of men and society, and his discriminating tact and judgment must have a wide field for its practical expansion.

R. J. G.⁹

The Official Register of the United States for the year 1849 shows the employment of Charles Fenno Hoffman in the Consular Bureau of the State Department as a clerk at \$1400 per annum.¹⁰ The work involved in this office might normally have been such as not to tax too heavily a mind which was still recuperating from a recent collapse. But this was a time of hustle and worry in the Department of State, while new responsibilities incident to the close of the Mexican war were making greater demands on the department than it was able to bear with its regular corps of assistants. Indeed it was this very emergency which gave Hoffman his position as an extra clerk.

Had Hoffman's work been moderately difficult instead of extremely exacting, he might have been able to regain complete mental balance; but long hours, worry, excitement, intense heat, and irregularity were too much

9. Vol. IV, p. 516.

10. Letter from Mr. J. E. Harper, Chief, Division of Appointments, to the author, June 19, 1926.

for him. All this seems clear from a letter dated from the Department of State, June 23, probably addressed to his sister Julia :

Yes, Dear, I am one of the ten-hour men. 'Tis now four and I must cool off before sitting down to a tepid dinner. So-you see, my own, I only wish to tell you that I am well—I began a long letter to you a day or two ago—Tis at my lodgings and you must take this screed [?] instead. 'Tis hot here but healthy.

Every one carries an umbrella as well as your

Own, affectionate,

My address is now—

C. F. Hoffman,

Department of State,

Washington.

C. F. H.

CHAS. FENNO HOFFMAN ¹¹

The strain soon became too great and Hoffman, after spending some time in a Baltimore hospital, where he was evidently treated as a recalcitrant patient,¹² was forced to resign and return to Dr. Kirkbride's hospital,¹³ where, after he again recuperated, he was allowed a great deal of freedom. At this time Miss Rebecca Gratz,

11. In Pennsylvania Historical Society Library.

12. The *Dollar Newspaper* of October 24, 1849 (copy in the Drexel Institute, Philadelphia, Pa.) says, "Charles F. Hoffman is now confined in the Baltimore hospital laboring under a malady which destroys so many of our most distinguished men of genius. The *New York Globe* says the clods of the valley are yet fresh over the remains of poor Edgar Allan Poe and now his compatriot in genius Hoffman is following him so closely, a miserable, unfortunate, pitiful, raving, desperate maniac."

13. "In connection with this pathetic incident, Mrs. Elizabeth Oakes Smith wrote Dr. Griswold, 1849: 'I see, by public prints, my worst fears in regard to Mr. H. are realized. I know all his utterly unselfish, beautiful character. Think of his magnificent intellect a wreck. He must not be shut up . . . that of itself would . . . drive him mad. Do see to it.'"
(Mary E. Phillips, *Edgar Allan Poe*, 1926, Vol. II, pp. 1526-27.)

who lived in Philadelphia and who had been a friend of the family for a great many years, continued her good offices, entertaining Hoffman from time to time and doing what she could in other ways to aid and bring him back to health.¹⁴ Hoffman used to go by himself to the home of Miss Gratz, have lunch, visit with her, and then return to the hospital.

How long he stayed at Kirkbride's is not known, but he very probably went to live with Miss Gratz or his brother George after a second recovery. Finally, however, his malady returned in a more serious form and he was admitted to the State Hospital at Harrisburg, where he remained for over thirty years, until his death in 1884.

His nephew, Mr. Edward Fenno Hoffman, who often visited the hospital in company with his father, is authority for the statement that Hoffman was a favorite patient at the hospital and was given great liberty. His spirits wavered between buoyancy and depression, but he was never confined. He often imagined unusual or even impossible things, and sometimes behaved in a fantastic manner, as when, disregarding the winter weather, he cut a hole in the ice and went swimming. But all of his conceits were of a harmless nature.¹⁵ Donald

14. See footnote 15, pp. 55-56, Chapter IV.

15. Curiously enough, perhaps even ominously, Hoffman had written in his story of "Rosalie Clare," which appeared in *Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie* (Vol. II, p. 226), a description of the inmates of an asylum. After describing the unhappy inmates "amusing themselves as each one listeth" he addressed the reader: "Did you ever look in vain among that motley crew for that piteous, yet picturesque air of distraction, with which poets and painters have so often gifted the maniac? You have gazed here in vain, if you hoped to find the romantic madness of a Hamlet, or an Ophelia! And yet, among those common looking

Grant Mitchell saw him at Harrisburg "in the latter third of that long interval between life and death, his physical buoyancy not broken down, living amid a great host of illusions; his mind placid, but distraught."¹⁶ Hoffman's trouble was at the time of his illness in Harrisburg diagnosed as chronic mania, but it would now be called manic-depressive psychosis.¹⁷ His physical health remained very good for about thirty years, but it began to fail gradually some months before his death on June 7, 1884.¹⁸

creatures—for all human creatures do look *common* when the spirit of the mind that once ennobled their forms hath departed, and left them animated only by the instincts of sense—among those common-looking creatures, are many who have once been the loveliest of the land."

16. *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

17. Letter from Dr. E. M. Green, Superintendent of Harrisburg State Hospital, to the author, November 24, 1925.

18. The hospital has preserved no record of his place of burial and it seems to be unknown to members of the family.

APPENDIX A

CORRESPONDENCE

With the exception of a few lengthy passages reproduced in the earlier part of the present work and here omitted to avoid repetition, I have attempted to give below, in chronological order, all the available correspondence of Hoffman, together with a calendar intended to list all the known letters of Hoffman that are for any reason unavailable. All omissions of passages printed in the preceding chapters have, of course, been indicated in the text of the correspondence, and references have been given to the pages where such passages are to be found. The initials EFH denote passages or entire letters omitted at the request of Hoffman's nephew, Mr. Edward Fenno Hoffman, of Philadelphia, who is unwilling to allow their publication. The letters partly or wholly omitted for this reason are all in his possession, and the notices of them included in the calendar below have been supplied by his daughter, Miss Phoebe Hoffman. Here, as throughout this study, I have attempted to reproduce the sources indicated without any changes in spelling, paragraphing, or punctuation, and without any emendations of other kinds.

1. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Feb. 7, 1827.¹
2. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Sept. 7, 1827.²
3. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Sept. 8, 1827.

1, 2. EFH

September 8, 1827.

George:

I've just returned from a dull excursion on Long Island. I was absent from the city three days. The island must be an agreeable place when the shooting is good, but I found no amusement there but bathing. I got down on Coney Island and there being no regular stage was unable to return until I sent for a conveyance. . . .³

4. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Oct., 1827.⁴

5. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Nov., 1827.

November, 1827

Dear George:

. . .⁵ I hope, Hoffman, that you have made up your mind and will eventually make up your body to become a great Beau. Believe me, it is necessary for one of us on sister's account to sacrifice himself for the good of the Republic and as I am *hors de combat* as regards balls, I shall claim as my prerogative an immunity from parties of every description. I have had two invitations already, one of them to Aunt Hoffmans I availed myself of. They took to dancing about 10 o'clock, as sensible people always do on that occasion when they find out how stupid they are "per se" and likely to become "inter se." I joined a party of married ladies and old gents at cards and rose from the table at 2 o'clock, \$3.00 plus—pretty well for a beginning you'll say. . . .⁶

For my own part you know I had one suit during the summer which brought me \$9.00!! And the only suit or part of one which I have had since is the old gray which still hangs on the back of a chair and will, I expect, bring me some 75 cents in the spring.

Thine affectionately,

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN

6. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Feb. 7, 1828.⁷

7. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Feb. 23, 1828.

February 23, 1828

George:

Although I haven't written "semper sum memor tui, quamvis non scribo" as Pliny says. . . .⁸

8. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Mar. 8, 1828.⁹

9. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Mar. 29, 1828.

New York, March 29, 1828

George:

The Legislature have passed a bill establishing a new court for the city and the general opinion is that Pa will be the Chief Justice—but of these things Mum. . . .¹⁰

C. F. H.¹¹

10. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, May, 1828.¹²

11. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, May 6, 1828.

May 6, 1828

Dear George

We are now in "toto tumultu movendi." We have moved into a house in Broadway near the corner of Spring Street. The house is a pleasant three story one but there is so much painting to be done that we shall not be settled for some weeks.

I have taken offices with Logan in Pine Street. We have fitted them up in a very neat style and made them in every respect so comfortable that I'm afraid all the lawyers of our acquaintance will inflict themselves upon us.

The new Court has been organized and is now sitting I must

7, 9, 10, 12. EFH

8. In possession of EFH. See p. 30 above for rest of this letter.

11. *The New-York City Directory, 1829* gives J. O. Hoffman as Chief Justice. He held this position on the bench until his death on January 24, 1837.

leave you and go and be sworn in as attorney of the Court before it adjourns.

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN

P. S. The best way to dispel Tedium is to sing Te Deum.¹³

12. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, June 4, 1828.¹⁴

13. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, June 19, 1828.¹⁵

14. HOFFMAN TO JOHN B. VAN SCHAICK, July 10, 1828.

New York, July 10, 1828.

Dear Van:

I have three times since I arrived here sat down to write to you but the demons of indolence and stupidity made the attempt of no avail. The "eggs and coffee of conversation" which revived my starved imagination at Albany left an indigestion of spirit which neither the Haides (hey-day) [sic]

I suppose that your friend Willis has by this time arrived as you expected and with his other agreeable qualities affects a nightly diversion in your favor at the River Orchard. Apropos how considerate I was the last evening I spent there in not poaching upon your Manor. I hope you estimate the forbearance. How did the immortal flourish? I hear that he is in town, but have not seen him. He was like a man's palate who has a cold the night I met him there [MS. illegible] I told an acquaintance the other night while in pursuit of a girl that he had followed her so long she was certainly chaste. . . .¹⁶ The letters you read me were inimitable. I received the "Signs of the Times" yesterday and was disappointed at seeing neither V.C. nor the "Nightengale Club."

Did you get the note I left for you with the "lovely mistress" album? I have tormented myself a great deal about the incongruous stuff with which I profaned it, and the opportunity I lost of pleasing one whom no one ever saw without being interested in

13. In possession of EFH

14. 15. EFH

16. See pp. 88-89 above for this omission.

or knew without wishing to please. The prose is d—d bad. One piece of verse I manufactured from the recollection of the lines I wrote you last year. I was so much ashamed of another that I adopted my favorite ruse of making it a translation for d—d the bit was it ever in any other language; for heaven's sake let them know that I wrote between twelve and one at night while tired to death.

You've heard of Niblo's Sans Souci. It will be a rare spot combining everything for amusement.

Wines to drink
For those who need
Books for those who think
To read
Paths in which with maids to stray
Winding as their curls
Bowers of Bliss
In which to kiss
The blushes or the frowns away
Of sinning wives or willing girls
Dancing near, as gay a sight as
(Upon my soul)
Could charm St. Vestris or St. Vitus
And music too to crown the whole.

There's an impromptu. Rendered for you. Beat it if you can.
Ever thine,

C. F. H.

I enclose some lines for *The Token*. They were written some time since and however indifferent are better than any other of the kind I could produce now. "The Muse has d—d me." In handing them to your friend Mr. Willis you will of course do it in a way which will leave him at perfect liberty to decide whether they have merit enough to be inserted without his being swayed by charitable feelings toward the production as that of a friend of

yours. Perhaps you had better not mention who wrote them and unless published, I wish no one to see them but himself. If they come too late or on any other account cannot be inserted I would like them to be returned immediately.¹⁷

H. Attorney, New York ¹⁸

15. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, July 27, 1828.

Dear George:

July 27, 1828

Sister Anne, as I suppose you have heard, is going to take charge of a seminary at Albany and Matilda ¹⁹ is to be an assistant.

For my own part, I still think of going to starve in the country, it is decidedly more reputable than starving in town. If one has no money in the city his character soon becomes as threadbare as his coat and impecuniosity [sic] is the worst crime a citizen can be convicted of.

I must now change my hand if I would make up in length what my letter wants in interest and incident. . . .²⁰

16. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Aug. 28, 1828.²¹

17. HOFFMAN TO JOHN B. VAN SCHAIK, Sept. 16, 1828.

Dear Van:

New York, September 16th, '28

I leave off in the midst of a letter to another correspondent to imitate your alacrity by thanking you for your two letters which I have just received. There is so much answerable matter in them that I hardly know what to begin with but—I am *not* the author

17. All the poetic contributions to *The Token* for 1828 are unsigned. There is no poem by Hoffman in this edition appearing in any of his later collected editions of his poems. Willis evidently did not accept Hoffman's "lines"; perhaps they came "too late."

18. Manuscript in Pennsylvania Historical Society.

19. Hoffman's cousin, daughter of Martin Hoffman and Mary Frances Seton Hoffman.

20. EFH. The last paragraph shows the change of handwriting suggested.

21. EFH

of the lines to Mr. Van Buren. I have been a great deal annoyed by their being attributed to me here not only that I do not wish to poach upon the reputational Manor of another but I would not, for especial reasons have Mr. Van B think I was the author. He had always been singularly polite to me and I'm not such a d—d fool as to throw dust at the rising sun when its beams have never shone otherwise than kindly upon me. If I did I would deserve to be scorched by it when it attained the meridian. You will oblige me literally, Van, by setting this thing right—I have particular reasons for it. The Piece I believe to be Haleck's—though poor for him—but it has his turn of expression here and there and one or two of his favorite figures. It's common you know for one to plagiarize from himself.

Secundo, you can never make me less "incredulous" than I am about your writing something worthy of "a book" for upon that subject I have never been skeptical: the idea I meant to convey was that neither of us have written anything that I have seen which would do us credit when thrust upon the public with our names formally attached. My notions on this subject may be peculiar but much as I admire the Sketches of your friend Willis and would like to be the author of them incog. I would not for \$500 have my name attached as author to the publication.

And now as to the Granger²² I had not the least idea that it should be published as it is. I meant you not only to insert verses but rewrite the whole piece. The first and last verses perhaps may stand but the others you might knead up or replace by better. I meant merely to give you the skeleton and if you chose to utilize it, leave you to complete the form. I think friend Frank richly deserves to be taken to task; he has been completely spoilt only he is now cured. The last time I saw him he was as pompous as an elephant. I suspected him of flourishing his trunk once or twice

22. This poem does not appear in *Signs of the Times* as the other poems mentioned here do. It was probably "burned" as Hoffman suggested in his letter.

over me. Now I've not the least objection to a man's being swollen with importance unless he swells so enormously as to occupy the insignificant place which I may hold near him as well as his own. But as you say Granger is a clever fellow and a right jolly. I used to like him exceedingly at Albany and am a little sorry that he's found out, since he would take to quacking. I don't know but that upon the whole you'd better burn the piece. At all events, don't, in rewriting it, make it as severe as the sketch I sent you would be if followed up as I intended and at all events be as mum as death about it for apart from its not doing us much credit I don't want to make enemies by writing satires as I'm too lazy to follow up the feud.

Couldn't think who the devil Romagio was. I like it much—school boyish—as you call it—it's quaint and easy.

I have been interrupted by the visit of a patient friend whom I have been urging for some six weeks to send some contribution to your paper. I have just gained my point—of the pieces you can judge yourself—the author is a lad of uncommon abilities—for he is but a lad I believe of eighteen; he graduated at fifteen or sixteen and even at that age distinguished himself in college by his writing and elocution; he is about the size of a boy of twelve but one of the most powerful orators I ever heard in voice and manner. His poetical talents are but little known, he never published before and wishes to keep entirely incog. He is so much immersed in study that he has no time to copy. I will transcribe his MS. and send it to you. They want kneading as the productions of most young poets do but if they have any other fault it arises from pruriency rather than poverty of imagination.

To return to the publishing scheme if you think of writing something as far as my exhortations go you have them of the warmest. I think the style you would best succeed in would be Epistolary Vivian G[r]eyish²³ It is less hackneyed of late than any other and

23. This evidently means after the style of Disraeli's *Vivian Grey*.

is the only kind of writing in which a man can best moralize and flourish about without impertinence to his reader. Your Procrustean idea is enough to carry a letter, otherwise decent, down. You know Lord Byron began an epistolary novel—good precedent.

As to writing a tale for the *Legendary* I ought not to have the time if I gave proper attention to my profession.²⁴ I want to see too whether the lines I sent to the *Token*²⁵ are published. I have a fragment a la Walter Scott a poem of an Indian fray partly written which I'd send except fear it would be recognized here as mine²⁶ and while it seems a set attempt to be fine it isn't better than the Caspar rhymes you have so charitably admitted into the *Signs of the Times*; I meant it for the *Legendary*.

I can't conceive what Mr Verplanck meant by telling Bryant he knew the youth who wrote the lines to Mr. V Buren; he is you know my uncle but is not aware I imagine, even that I write at all.

truly yours,

C. F. H.²⁷

18. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, NOV. 4, 1828.

New York, November 4, 1828

Dear George

You should have been here for the burning of the Bowery theatre. It was the finest spectacle ever exhibited at that building. They are going to rebuild it at once.

24. In the *Legendary* edited by N. P. Willis, Boston, 1828, there is a story "The Legend of Bethel Rock"; it is contributed anonymously, but seems very much like Hoffman's work. The story tells of the origin of the name of Bethel Rock, where a white man was killed by his Indian enemies. It shows the sympathy and insight into Indian character so common in Hoffman's writings.

25. *The Token* was edited by Willis in Boston in 1828. Most of the poems are anonymous, so that it is impossible to distinguish any of Hoffman's contributions.

26. This probably refers to "The Ambuscade," which appeared in the *New-York American*, November 30, 1830.

27. Manuscript in Pennsylvania Historical Society, Philadelphia.

Your old friend, Miss Storm, is engaged to Sam Bard—he won't be the first bard that has courted a tempest.

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN ²⁸

19. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Mar. 8, 1829.

March 8, 1829

George—

Bethlehem, Pa.

Matilda ²⁹ is sitting by me and sends her love to you. She has just offered to bet me that she will write you a long letter—but you know I never trust what women say.

I have not given up the idea of going to Europe as Bearer of Dispatches, but have not heard a word of it.³⁰ Should I go, it would be well for you to be here to take care of Julia. I have not heard a word about the other appointment you know of. It would be too good an opportunity for so luckless a Devil as myself.

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN ³¹

20. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Apr., 1829.

New York, April 1829
Thursday

I have but a few moments, my dear George, to inform you of the melancholy bereavement the family has met with. Uncle George died on the 18th at Mount Upton after a week's illness. He met with some slight injury in his hand—it became inflamed—

28. In possession of EFH.

29. Hoffman's cousin, daughter of Martin Hoffman and Mary Frances Seton Hoffman.

30. William Cullen Bryant six years later also wanted to be appointed a bearer of dispatches, "a place that carried no emoluments with it, but offered certain facilities of entrance on landing, etc." (Parke Godwin, *A Biography of William Cullen Bryant*, 1883, Vol. I, p. 307).

31. In possession of EFH.

he refused to have the usual remedies applied and the inflammation extended up the arm to the side—reached the lungs and proved fatal. In him you know we lose the last relative of our Mother's fated family—what a singular fatality has pursued them! As the three last have successively died I have thought that Ma's early death was less to be regretted—for after all that she suffered with such noble and pious resignation her gentle spirit must have rebelled or broken under the repeated blows she would have lived to meet. These things are strange but "'tis worse than useless to repine"—if Blind Fate orders it thus, its will is irresistible [sic], if a high inscrutable providence, "'Tis worse than useless to rebel." Philosophy teaches endurance in one case, Religion—resignation in the other.

Poor Euphemia has been staying at our house for a week past. I walked home with her last night from Mrs. Hutles and prepared her for the terrible truth that she must hear on reaching home. Julia broke it to her on reaching her room—she did not weep for some time but it seemed as if her heart would break. She is now more composed—I pity poor old Caty more than any one else—to survive a family of ten, all of whom she had taken care of when children with whose interests too she was so completely identified. But I have no time to write more. Pa, Julia, and Matilda send their love to you. Euphemia, of course, does not know that I write.

Ever my dear Brother,
Your affectionate,

C. FENNO HOFFMAN ³²

21. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Sept., 1829.

September 1829

Dear George:

As you may have seen by my last letter it is impossible for me to leave town even for a few hours at present. I have the *whole* edi-

32. In possession of EFH.

torial charge of the *American* and until relieved by Mr. King, which will probably happen next week, I cannot be absent from the office except during the hours of the night previous to 7 a.m. at which time the labors of the day commence. You must remember, my dear Hoffman, whenever you think of me as remiss in writing that my fingers are now the tools by which my wits gain me a livelihood, and when you read the articles marked by an asterisk in the *American* you may know that I commune with you as lovers have done for some thousand years—through a star.

I have ridden much lately a young handsome and half-blooded trotting colt belonging to a man who lets him out to me alone.

C. F. HOFFMAN ³³

22. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Dec., 1829.

New York, December, 1829.

Dear George:

. . .³⁴ Nothing could exceed the kindness of Miss Gratz and her brothers and the whole family showed to myself and Julia while we were in Philadelphia.

I am getting used to meeting and putting off creditors as "eels are to skinning," to use a polite phrase. Pa's health is not as good as usual and he needs some well founded expectation of being relieved before long to sustain him. He expects to be made Recorder; this you must not breathe in a letter to anyone for if it were to return to the city, it might by taking wind thwart his expectations.³⁵

Permit me to thank you, most excellent sir, for the very sage advice. What do you know about my Brag—playing abilities? The fact is, Hoffman, though you'll stare at the assertion that although

33. In possession of EFH.

34. EFH

35. Josiah Ogden Hoffman had been Recorder of the City of New York from 1808 to 1815, but there is available no record of his reappointment to this office in 1829.

I am averse to cards and play wretchedly in most games I am a great *stick* at Brag—I have two essential requisites for playing well. I am as cool as a moonbeam, and as calm as darkness. I do not enjoy the game and my very indifference helps me. How mortifying it is that I have no opportunities for practising self-denial, but as I have cut the whole Kosmos of parties, etc., I am never exposed to temptation.

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN ³⁶

23. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Dec. 4, 1829[?].

December 4,

Dear George:

. . .³⁷ Take care of yourself, my dear Hoffman. You and I have changed situations; thou art the *ultima spes generis Hoffmani* and I am not quite as desperate a concern as thou wert in Virginia.

Good bye,

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN ³⁷

24. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Jan. 10, 1830.³⁸

25. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Mar. 10, 1830.

New York, March 10, 1830

Dear George:

I read an article from the "Journal of Health" the other day in which the great Dr. Cullins's name was given as authority for riding on horseback being a specific in consumption and dyspepsia. . . .³⁹

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN ⁴⁰

36. In possession of EFH.

37. EFH. In possession of EFH.

38. EFH. But see pp. 60-61 above for extract.

39. EFH

40. In possession of EFH.

26. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Mar. 18, 1830.⁴¹
 27. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Apr. 21, 1830.

New York, April 21, 1830.

George,

I have become completely Americanized, having now been with the establishment long enough to feel quite "nateral like." My long articles like that on Moore's Life of Byron will be signed H, my communications with one of my other initials, and paragraphs with a star *. So you may know by whom you are edified. I like my new business very much. I have a desk in the front office pleasantly situated near the window in the morning, and in the afternoon I have all the back room to myself. Reviews of novels and papers I perfectly revel in. You must concoct a communication, humorous and descriptive, take a couple of weeks about it and it shall appear as "a letter from an esteemed correspondent in the interior of Pennsylvania."

C. F. H.

P. S. . . .⁴² The ex-sheriff of the county told me that Ogden could have any office in the gift of the county, and a very respectable looking man exclaimed that he would start through the storm at that moment and walk to Newburgh to please him.⁴³

28. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, 1830 OR 1831.

George E. Hoffman,
 Princeton, N. J.

. . .⁴⁴ Pa joked Caty a great deal about letting you have his umbrella He said that he believed she would give you the last shirt off his back. We chatted together about you till I went to the party at 10—I do this often now—for Pa is a delightful

41, 42, 44. EFH

43. In possession of EFH.

companion when he is as at present. God grant that the restoration to himself may be permanent.

Affectionately,
CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN ⁴⁵

29. HOFFMAN TO JOHN B. VAN SCHAICK, Dec.[?], 1831.

Dear Van—

(or Col—I believe they both mean leader) I received your letter and Editorial at the same time and need hardly say how much they gratified me. You did lay it on pretty thick though in the Daily ⁴⁶ and regarded it not as a business transaction with the public and a solid proof of your friendship I should most irreverently have laughed in my sleeve the while I read it—The fact is however that I have been served up in such handsome terms by the press in general it makes me feel like a fool—and half of my apprehensions of failure in the proposed undertaking are relieved by a conviction of the truth of the proverb—*Infatus curat deus* Your admirable success for such a lazy fellow affords me also much consolation.

Tuesday Oct.—A week I believe has gone by since I was interrupted as above with writg to you. Nothing of particular interest has in the meantime occurred that I wot of to tell you. The Knick [Knickerbocker] comes on strongly but not swiftly—The best names in town—Monied—Literary and fashionable are upon the subscription list—but as yet they only make about 250. When the Pub^{sr} however gets out his Yankee collectors among the Dii Minores we shall go on faster I hope. The devil of this delay is that it prevents me from making literary arrangements with the scriblers—inasmuch as the publisher will not commit himself to pay for articles till we get 500 subs. Matters will be square I hope

45. This letter is undated, but the reference to Josiah Ogden Hoffman's health places it at about 1830 or 1831. It is in the possession of EFH.

46. Van Schaick was working on the *Daily Advertiser*.

by the first of Jany. When you and Bloodgood ⁴⁷ will be tempted to forward something sketchy and spirited. I suppose you smoked me in [*Vindex* upon] ⁴⁸ I wrote in haste intending to follow it up, but people suspected me and I am so situated in many respects that it is unwise to indulge in such political squibs. You have handled the pantaloons so neatly too as to leave but little to be done in the way of tailoring them—Duer has promised me an article on the great subject before the election & you may be on the lookout for it as I dare say it will be something very whimsical. I sometimes regret extremely that our pleasant correspondence should so completely decay—and yet I hardly know whether it would be expedient to revive it now. We are both engaged in pursuits which I believe have a tendency to exhaust certain properties in the mental soil—and though we not throw away ideas of any value in letter writing yet the practice of it could assist in consuming that freshness of thought which oozes away but too rapidly in Newspaper paragraphs—I already have the feeling of a hack and believe I should have to lie fallow for years (if you will let me confound two similes) before I could be trained again as a blooded racer—I find that just as I am getting a marketable reputation—worth perhaps \$1000 a year, my intellectual pride is pretty thoroughly humbled—Of course like a sensible man I shall go on in my attempts to humbug the world—for thereby hangs my living—it is thy profession & it is mine. But do not my dear Van in your private letters—when we do write—let us humbug one another. Heaven preserve us from degenerating into that class of mortals who gull the public with their psuedo

47. This is probably Francis Bloodgood, 1769-1840, an attorney in Albany who wrote *Assault and Battery*, Albany, 1808.

48. Although the Manuscript is illegible here, it might possibly be "*Vindex* upon." Hoffman might have meant that Van Schaick detected his style in an article signed "*Vindex*." Search in the *New-York American* to which Hoffman was contributing reveals nothing of this kind however.

merit till they really believe the chant themselves. I found my hopes in life more upon the stupidity of the world than anything brilliant in myself. And this I take it is the secret of Van Beurens rise—I will not pause to read over this prating egotism lest I should tear it up and leave you letterless—So Farewell here.

Yours

CHAS F. H.⁴⁹

30. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, May 28, 1834.⁵⁰

31. HOFFMAN TO GULIAN C. VERPLANCK, Feb. 12, 1832.

N. York Feb. 12th

Dear Sir,

I have just read your kind letter to George and hasten to express my gratification at the prospect it opens to him. I cannot of course form an opinion of all that may be required to meet the expectations of Gov. Cass in the responsible station near his person, but I have unhesitatingly advised George to accept it if attainable. He is not practised in composition but he has industry and talent in writing, a thorough knowledge of figures and general acquaintance with the formula of business. This with his zeal for the interest of his employers as exhibited in his engineering career, qualify him, with a little training, for any station of honour & trust, within the ambition of a moderate man, similar to that which you designate for him. I, to be sure am not the best authority in a case of this kind but I have the less hesitation in offering my opinion, for what, all things considered, it is worth, that George is now in his twenty fourth year, high spirited and ambitious, but needy and without the prospect of employment and

49. In New York Public Library. The reference to *The Knickerbocker* places it in the last of the year 1831.

50. See p. 55 above for this letter.

my opportunities of judging of his character have been better than those of them who are older.

I must conclude in haste to meet the mail,

With the highest respect

Your affec Nep

C. F. HOFFMAN ⁵¹

32. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Aug., 1832.

Buttermilk Falls,

August, 1832

Dear George:

I board in a widow's family, an humble but neat establishment. The table is of the simplest—pork and rice and rice and pork forming the varieties. Mr. Duer is my constant companion; he is a host in himself. We fished a stream for two or three miles up yesterday and today we rowed about four on the river together.

C. F. HOFFMAN ⁵²

33. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, Aug. 2, 1832.⁵³

34. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE HOFFMAN, 1833[?].

Dear George:

. . .⁵⁴ There is in fact no sporting or merrymaking anywhere. Exposure to the sun as well as to the night air is much to be dreaded, as I can bear witness from catching the intermittent, though lightly, by fishing a few hours the other day. I did not feel the attack until at West Point day before yesterday when it came on violently. I was dosed and bled there—had a chill and a headache yesterday. I feel pretty well today.

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN ⁵⁵

⁵¹. MS. in New York Historical Society. Since the letter states that "George is now in his twenty fourth year," it must have been written in 1832. George Hoffman was born in 1808. The superscription contains the address, "Hon. G. C. Verplanck" at Washington.

⁵². In possession of EFH.

⁵³. ⁵⁴. EFH

⁵⁵. This undated letter was probably written in 1833 while Hoffman was on a visit to West Point. It is in the possession of EFH.

35. HOFFMAN TO JOHN V. VAN SCHAICK, Dec. 12, 1836.

On the publication of *The New-York Book of Poetry*.⁵⁶

36. HOFFMAN TO ROBERT M. BIRD, Jan. 11, 1837.⁵⁷

37. HOFFMAN TO ROBERT M. BIRD, Feb. 2, 1837.⁵⁸

38. HOFFMAN TO ROBERT M. BIRD, Mar. 28, 1837.

My Dear Dr.

Office American March 28th, 1837

The April no is just closing and your leaves for May will be acceptable as soon as you can send it. If ready, to avoid delay, you had better forward it by mail than wait for an opportunity—

Your hint about a design for the cover of the magazine is a good one. The idea of an Indian had before occurred to me and I prepared a design which however was not executed. We have now determined upon a *full length* Chantreys *Washington*—which will be something new. It will be on the cover of the May no. Let me know how many pages you want of critical notices and send what you wish to go in as early as you can in the month—

We have the devil to pay here and no pitch hot. The stoppage of the Josephs⁵⁹ makes longer faces than did the great Fire—The present state of things I believe to be more alarming even than those who are most affected by it are aware The suffering of the poor is demoralizing them and a Jacobinical spirit is rife in this city that before many months are over may produce an explosion that no one dreams. The accursed cry of “The Poor against the rich” raised by the corn feeders of Tammany in ‘thirty-four—is not unlikely to bring customers to their crib whom they did not dream of—or rather whom they thought their Whig opponents might, when matters came to extremity, keep quiet—The chalice will now be commended to their lips as well as to those for whom

56. See pp. 77-78 above.

57. See pp. 80-83 above.

58. See pp. 83-84 above.

59. The *Commercial Advertiser*, March 18, 1837, devotes its leading editorial to the stoppage of payment by the well established firm of J. L. and S. Joseph and Company, in consequence of failures in New Orleans.

they prepared it. I was a warm partizan in those times and incurred some odium for the zeal with which I denounced those who echoed this most damnable cry, and called upon the well ordered of society to *let the line be drawn* or rather to keep it where these people had chosen to draw it, and see how they could bide the storm they had raised. My anonymous scribblings however like the squibs which elicited them passed off as mere electioneering paragraphs. For our people had no stamina to withstand the wheedlings of their opponents: who while they had purses of their own to be protected encouraged the mob to cut those of their (personal friends &) political enemies all by way of a good humoured electioneering trick. The seed that was then sown has been ever since maturing and an intelligent mechanic who mingles much with 'the people' told me yesterday that there were elements at work here from which a tolerable French Revolution might be compounded. I am no politician now & perhaps am credulous in taking the loco foco's word for his information But we certainly have a large population fit for anything that's vile & desperate & I yet I'm a loco Foco as well as

Yours truly

CHAS. F. HOFFMAN ⁶⁰

39. HOFFMAN TO COLONEL ASPINWALL, Mar. 18, 1838.

My Dear Sir,

New York March 18th 1838

. . . ⁶¹

The poor General has been engaged upon a sorry duty this winter in keeping the *raff* of our Northern border from involving

60. In the Robert M. Bird collection of the University of Pennsylvania are found this letter and two others from Hoffman to Bird all of which are printed here for the first time. In them Hoffman discusses a cover design for *The American Monthly* and the political and social situation developing from the failure of an important business firm. The "full length Washington" planned as a cover for the May number did not appear. *The American Monthly* retained its staid, conservative cover throughout its existence.

61. For this omission concerning the publication of *Wild Scenes* see pp. 119-21 above.

us in a war with England. He has done his duty nobly however notwithstanding the abuse of meddling demagogues on this side of the line, and lip-service royalists on the other. It is a well understood thing here that those of the latter who are most loud mouthed in denouncing the rebels and their silly American abettors are the very men who were expected to take the most active part in the [MS. illegible] rising. The rascals speak of Scott in their papers as if he were in collusion with the misguided Americans whom he has been exerting every nerve to disperse. Gov. Head (whose books published in cheap 18-penny editions have been disseminated all over our country and made him known and popular everywhere) is now universally laughed at for his Sophomorean Farewell to the Canadians. What a pity that such a clever fine fellow should behave so like a great boy. I suppose though that we on the seaboard have no idea of the excited atmosphere in which he has lately moved thought and written. The only excitement here was among the young men of our different volunteer corps who were eager to be called out to get back the state arms from the Navy Islanders and who were mighty tickled with the idea of going west to "size up" that gang of pirates. Van Rensselaer the Navy Island hero was an old school-mate of mine; a fellow as brave as steel but with no more brains than a woodcock. Being the only gentleman among these "Free Companions" they made him General; His want of conduct shows how unfittly. By a dashing movement in the first instance he might have effected a lodgment in Canada and tried the loyalty of McNab's militia if not of McNab himself; whose brawling loyalty and outrageous abuse of our officers who were doing their best to heal the feud has only confirmed a suspicion of his having been in the first instance privy to if not concerned in the councils of the rebels. I fear it will be impossible for John Bull to come to a full understanding of this affair. The truth is there are a number of bad men along that Frontier on both sides. Small fellows with big ambition who desire nothing more than to embroil the two countries. On the

American side these fellows have influence from the rabble who look up to them and on the British they gain weight from adroitly appearing to act in concert with the respectable half pay officers and other substantial people settled in their Neighborhood, but the patriotic republicanism of the Americans and the yesty loyalty of the British meddlars are equally apocryphal. I don't know that it would be fair from mere rumour who you know is a "lying jade" to class McNab with these. He is brave and intelligent and ought therefore to be honest. I should think however that his royal mistress would hardly thank him for his officiousness in the affair of the Caroline, or the very questionable manner in which he seems to have seconded Scott and Worth in their exertions to keep matters quiet. These friends of yours are on excellent terms with the regular British officers who appreciate their exertions and keep up a good understanding with them throughout.

The Florida business is pretty much in statu quo. Jessup though still sustained by the administration, is considered a disgraced man and is I am told put in Coventry by our officers alike for his traitorous friendship to Scott and the base treachery which wrought the confinement and consequent death of Osceola. He must be perfectly callous not to feel the universal burst of execration which the last act has called forth from every part of the Union. He is now where public opinion can hardly reach him, but, if not cashiered, on his return from the present Campaign, he must wither beneath the blast of popular indignation that awaits him and has been already heralded by the biting sarcasm of the press. But I must stop prosing about matters of which you are doubtless already fully advised by the newspapers.

Ever My Dear Sir,
Faithfully yours,

P. S. . . .

C. FENNO HOFFMAN ⁶²

62. Manuscript in New York Historical Society. For the "P. S." and "N. B." of this letter see pp. 120-21 above.

40. HOFFMAN TO COLONEL ASPINWALL, Aug. 12, 1838.

My dear Colonel,

N York, August 12th 1838

I wrote to you instantly upon the rec.^{pt} of your letter informing of your disposition of "Wild Scenes" But kept back my letter in the hope of being able to add some new things to swell the volumes; an intention which a variety of circumstances have prevented me from accomplishing.

Having now determined to lie upon my oars, so far as literature is concerned, until I hear how these scribblings are received by the public, I can only give you my most grateful thanks for your kindness in forwarding my views whatever the result may be. In the meantime I wish that Mr. Bentley would forward me his "Miscellany" (changing the name) in order that I may have an opportunity of giving the last corrections to such of the tales as shall appear in that work. . . .⁶³ I scarcely wonder at the fate of Col. Stone's book. Though rich in interesting material it is a pretty heavy piece of composition as a whole. I reviewed it in the N York Quarterly⁶⁴ and strained a point to bring it before the public. Thinking that the writer, whatever might be his literary merit deserves, in this country, patronage for so laborious and *patriotic* an undertaking. We lack such *omnium gatherums* of facts & traditions for our future historians and romance writers.

Your friend Gen. Scott is still among the Cherokees where his judicious, humane—yet decided conduct has won the good will of all parties and added equally to his permanent fame and present popularity.

Sincerely & cordially,

Ever yours,

C. F. HOFFMAN⁶⁵ ♀

Colonel Aspinwall.

63. See pp. 118-19 above for account of John Cheney's visit to New York.

64. Hoffman is evidently confused in his magazines here, for search reveals no review of Colonel Stone's book in *The New York Quarterly*, but an extended review appears in *The American Monthly Magazine* for August and September, 1838, of Stone's *Life of Joseph Brant—Thayendanegea, Including the Indian Wars of the American Revolution*, 1838.

65. Manuscript in New York Historical Society.

41. HOFFMAN TO WILLIAM H. SEWARD, 1838 OR 1839.

His Excellency, Governor Seward:

Will Governor Seward permit a Knickerbocker Member of the New York Historical Society to say a few words to him in relation to the proposed mission to Holland.

An old acquaintance of Governor Seward in whom the writer, takes, he trusts, a pardonable interest, has been for some time engaged in preparing some legendary works connected with the history of this state. The first of which he was obliged to publish in England about a year since owing to the difficulty of finding a publisher here; and another of which of rather a more ambitious character is now lying idly by him on account of the last mentioned cause. These light matters which seem to find more favor anywhere than in the state to illustrate whose history and traditional resources they were written were intended merely as preparatory to a series of graver works comprising the biography of our New York worthies after the same fashion that Mr. Sparks has presented those of the Union at large. Governor Leisler, an ancestor of the writer who (as his successor to the Gubernatorial chair may remember) was executed for high treason in this harbor, was selected as a not unfit person to begin with. For he was the first People's Governor to whom the colony ever gave birth, and a man whose patriotic career the English Historians (I will not add the Yankee) have done signal injustice. Stuyvesant the worthy representative of the Van Tromps and De Rutgers of Republican Holland, was decided upon as the second subject; the grotesque associations with which the genius of Irving has unhappily associated his name rendering it inexpedient to commence with him until some degree of serious interest was bespoken for our Dutch ancestors in the previous work. Now to give full value to this project or indeed to accomplish it with any sort of success the archives of the Old Dutch West India Company ought to be open to the writer. And when his friend Mr. Stephens lost his chance of the appointment the hope of turning over the Latin records of the

Colonial History of Holland or handling the Dutch Missions under the eye of his old Boss Harmanus Bleecker (our present minister in those parts) with whom Mr. Hoffman studied law at Albany, gladdened the heart of that gentleman exceedingly and he rejoiced to hear that he had some friends who were zealously urging his nomination upon the Governor. It was impossible for him to go to Holland at his own expense yet he was unwilling to forego a project which he had long had at heart. But, though a committeeman and active Whig partisan of '34 whose labors in the press exposed him to some share of rough handling at that time, he had no recent services or sufferings in the good cause to plead and he therefore abstained from presenting himself personally before your excellency till the present moment.⁶⁶

Judging now from the late newspaper discussions that his candidacy is forgotten by his friends at Albany (though he will not believe in the report that this mission is about to be intrusted to one who is not a native of the state nor in any way identified with its historical associations and dearly traditional feelings) he ventures to present his name as one of the few who if his circumstances afforded it would undertake this task as a genuine labor of love—a somewhat idle person whose serious but hitherto fruitless pursuits have all tended to the high end which the mission professes to have chiefly in view.

With unfeigned respect

Your cordial friend and servant,

C. F. HOFFMAN.⁶⁷

His Excellency, Governor Seward.

66. In his letter to Robert M. Bird, March 18, 1837, Hoffman mentioned the fact that in the campaign of 1834 he had been a "warm partizan" and had incurred some odium for his zeal.

67. In 1839 John Romeyn Brodhead was sent to Holland to study the old Dutch historical documents. He stayed three years. This is doubtless the appointment Hoffman was seeking from William H. Seward, elected Governor in 1838. This letter is in the Pennsylvania Historical Society.

42. HOFFMAN TO COLONEL ASPINWALL, Mar. 9, 1839.

March 9, 1839

My dear Sir:

Mr. Schoolcraft, our great authority here in all Indian matters, tells me that he is about forwarding some new writings of his to England. It is doubtless unnecessary for me to say anything in their behalf, but thinking that in your long absence from here you may possibly have lost sight of this distinguished countryman of ours, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of reminding you that in all information relating to the manners language and traditions of our aborigines, Mr. S. is better and more *authentically* skilled than any writer in the United States. It is to him, whose ingenious labors and years of research have carried him to the bottom of the subject that our future Romance writers must look as the pioneer guide and purveyor who has not only explored the country but fixed its landmarks and quarried out their best materials for the building up of American fiction. I have ventured to tell him that his laborious and authentic researches will be far more prized in Europe than at home where the value of such curious contributions to science is though highly, certainly not widely appreciated. I trust that the success of his work will prove me a good prophet.

Ever faithfully,
Your obliged friend and servant,

C. F. HOFFMAN.

Col. Aspinwall,
London.

P.S.

Will not Mr. Bentley send me a copy of "Wild Scenes"? I have seen or heard nothing of it save through the newspapers. The Harpers after a dozen procrastinating intrusions have put me out of course of publishing here as they say that the republication of the stories from Bentley's Miscellany in all our newspapers shows it not worthwhile for them now to take hold of the matter. My

novel comes on slowly. The delights of literary vagrancy have in the last 18 months been alternated by so much that was untoward in my circumstances that I can hardly take up my pen with satisfaction again until I am established in a position independent of its exercise, and this is nearly effected. A literary man is a sort of a Pariah in our money-making community unless he gets to the comfortable eminence of reputation where Irving and Cooper sit enthroned.

Your friend, General Scott, you will see by the papers is again before the public in a situation of great responsibility. There is some slight talk of him for the Presidency and for one I should not be sorry to see him elevated to the station.

March 9th, 1839.

C. F. HOFFMAN R[ec'd]. 11th April ⁶⁸

43. HOFFMAN TO JULIA HOFFMAN, Oct. 30, 1840.

Piermont, Friday,

Oct. 30, 1840.

My dear Julia:

I must tell you how comfortably Caty finds herself. I have given her my room which is the most cheerful one in the house and which I have made the warmest by closing up two of the front windows permanently by hanging them with curtains. She has her old bureau there with her with the family Bible and big Prayer book on it as of old, the picture of Uncle Ward hanging over it and framed drawings by Uncles Charles and Edward are upon the chimney. George is going to order a low wicker chair to be made for her and then no old lady will be more "snug." To complete the arrangement there is a closet with shelves on one side of the mantel piece in which the house linens with lots of reclaimable

68. New York Historical Society.

old shirts and darnable old stockings are congregated for her amusement and the good old soul has already commenced mousing among them to her great and lasting satisfaction for this hospital of invalid habiliments is likely to be well supplied. John has made her a low bench to sit by the kitchen fire and I actually detected her yesterday in her spectacles reading the new works with Guy asleep on the hearth at her feet. She says that this promising cadet of the family is not half as promising as Sholto⁶⁹—that I shall never have another such dog but that it is an amusing little creature. She remonstrated strongly against keeping her room when she found it had been mine. "We might stick her anywhere, she did not mind, and as for the room with the fireplace in it, she would never make use of it." She told George, though, very frankly that Miss Julia would never like the establishment—"so many doors and so many windows. I never saw the like. We couldn't make her comfortable in any way."

The weather has now cleared off beautifully after a dull storm and Caty is going about the house throwing open window-sashes and shaking coats, etc., to her heart's delight. She laughs a good deal at being lost every now and then in the wings of the rambling chateau. She has stepped out of doors several times when meaning to enter a room, plumped in the Office of one of the young men's rooms when thinking she was opening the door of mine. In a word, my dear Julia, I think you may make yourself perfectly easy both as regards her comfort and cheerfulness. The first is amply secured for her and she is surrounded by sufficient novelty and variety of the very kind to suit her to secure the last.

Ever your affectionate,

C. F. H.⁷⁰

69. The Hoffman family dog which Hoffman mentions by name in his essay "Fascination" appearing in *The Literary World*, Vol. III, pp. 825-26.

70. *Hoffman Family Letters*, ed. by E. F. Hoffman, privately printed, 1903, pp. 81-82.

44. HOFFMAN TO COLONEL ASPINWALL, Sept. 3, 1841.

My dear Colonel:

New York, September 3rd, 1841.

Had you anything agreeable to tell me about the fortunes of "Greyslaer" I suppose I should have heard from you by the expiration of the year. The work has here gone through three editions. But John Bull is harder to please than Jonathan and if Mr. Bentley has had difficulty in getting rid of it I should like to know "the worst," and console myself with the success on this side of the Atlantic; I stepped into a berth under the Tippecanoe administration last spring, and my pen has been idle since. But I mean to be industrious with it during the coming winter. Some recent orders which our Booksellers have received from Germany for "Greyslaer" give me encouragement to go on with another romance; though had I leisure I would prefer floating about the country and write about the actual scenes which passed beneath my eye.

You must be at a loss what to make of the political condition of the country just now. The old parties seem upon the point of breaking up, but Mr. Tyler keeps his own counsel so well that no one knows what a day will bring forth or what next may be the rallying cry. In one matter though I think the whole nation is as one man, viz., in resistance to what we consider the overbearing measures of England. The people (save on the frontier) are not excited about a war. The majority do not anticipate one and few, very few wish it. Yet all are on the alert to resist everything like encroachment. There is much difference of opinion as to the merits of the two great questions under discussion (MacLeod and Maine Boundary) but there is a remarkable unanimity of belief that England wishes to bully or humbug us if she can. There is none of the personal animosity or hatred of Englishmen that gave virulence to the people's feelings about the last war, but a wide-spread and very thorough conviction of the dangerous and all grasping policy of the British Government. Her movements in Syria and China have been read, watched and followed in our

country newspapers all over the Union; watched with interest and admiration, but still applied in a manner that has awakened alarm and jealousy in relation to anything that she may do on this continent. If we fight it will not be from testiness of temper but from the settled conviction that it is wise and expedient for us to fight that the *ultima ratio* has been forced upon us. A terrible fight it would be should it indeed take place. England, it is true, would now have both her hands to use against us. But we should not be divided among ourselves as we were during the last war. We might be licked at first; But I think Europe would be astonished as the energies of this country—resources they do not yet dream of here—developed themselves. Now my dear Colonel you are perhaps smiling at all this as mere idle speculation; well God grant it may be so. But the cannon of Castle William whose walls they are today trying with 24 pounders are thundering in my ears. Little governor's island is bristling with a thousand bayonets and a steam frigate and seventy-four are lying off the Battery ready to slip their cables and put to sea at three hours notice. Your old friend General Scott is here and there and everywhere saying "it is improbable there should be war" but chafing like an old war horse who wants only for his rider to slacken the curb when he will bound forward in the charge. The General did wonders in pacifying the border. He could rouse it still more easily. In the meantime mercantile distress and other untoward circumstances have filled the country with food for gunpowder, "the cankers of a calm world and long peace." It would do you good, Colonel, to see the fine looking fellows with whom they have filled up the ranks of the army in lieu of the drunken foreigners which used to compose its material. But I am boring you perhaps with matters which you have already gathered from the newspapers.

Ever my Dear Sir,

Thankfully yours,

Colonel Aspinwall.

C. FENNO HOFFMAN.⁷¹

⁷¹. Manuscript in the Library of Yale University.

45. HOFFMAN TO GEORGE BIGELOW, Sept. 8, 1841.

New York, September 8, 1841.

Dear Sir:

I accept with pleasure the complimentary invitation of the [Boston] Lyceum and will present myself into the hands of your committee as early in the month of November as may be agreeable to them. I promise it will not be necessary to mention more in your programme than "One Lecture by Charles Fenno Hoffman, leaving the announcement of the subject till the evening of delivery.

With great respect,

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN.⁷²

George Bigelow, Esq.,
Corresponding Secretary.

46. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Nov. 23, 1841.

N. York Nov 23
'41

My Dear Sir,

In reply to yours of the 18th just recd. I would say that I have no objection in the world to prepare the notice you wish—provided the necessary facts are supplied by Col DeKay.⁷³ Still I do think it a pity that you yourself should not have the handling of such a subject—Your knowledge of the poets and poetry of the country is so much greater than mine that that alone—apart from all other considerations, make you the man to give Drake his proper niche in your temple—⁷⁴

I am really concerned to have you speak of your cough as you

⁷². Manuscript in Pennsylvania Historical Society.

⁷³. Hoffman evidently means Commodore George Coleman DeKay who married Janet Halleck, only child of Joseph Rodman Drake, and who edited the first collection of Drake's poems in 1836, sixteen years after the poet's death.

⁷⁴. It seems impossible to determine whether the biography of Drake in *The Poets and Poetry of America* was written by Hoffman or Griswold.

do. The worst thing in the world for such an ailment I have always found to be the night air. Especially when one is exposed to it just after his mind has been actively engaged. "I pray you avoid it"!—Those Wistar ⁷⁵ Parties! coming home heated from them!—to one of your exciteable temperament such exposure cannot but be hurtful—I never took a cold in the woods in my life; though I have slept thro' more than one chilly night in wet clothes—It is from heated rooms—draughts—and the flat damp of city mid-nights that the nuisance comes—So for God's sake take care of yourself and regard my injunctions more than you would an old womans preachments.

I saw Tuckerman in Boston the other day. He enquired with much interest after you and begged to be remembered when I should see you—

With much regard

Yours sincerely

C. F. H.⁷⁶

47. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Jan. 11, 1842.

Remember when you send the things
to Greeley my No. is 37 Murray St.

The letter of which you spoke my Dear Griswold came to hand yesterday. I hoped you would have called again before you left town. At the last we seperated so suddenly that I had no chance to answer your questions about "Go Mocking flower"—The reason I omitted it was that the imitation of Waller's Go lovely rose is so close that what was meant for a paraphrase might be mistaken for a plagiarism—You are the best judge of this however as a second party generally is when any judgment that is begot of or akin to self-love is concerned—If you wish it why not put it in at the close where a note if one be needed, would not come amiss.

75. A prominent family in Philadelphia. Griswold ultimately died of throat trouble.

76. In the Boston Public Library.

That scrap to which I gave you for the Memoir—omit or shake it as you think best. I am sorry now I suggested the Mirror—for if every one mentions his year of editorship poor Morris I fear would be naked as the court galant in the play when one claims the cloak, another the feathered beaver a third his doublet until the unlucky magnifico is only left a shirt to shrive in. You might lump the matter in this way—"became the proprietor of the Am. Mo in March '35 and during the three or four following years, while the chief editor of the same, as well as subsequently, his pen was also busy in the Mirror. New Yorker & other journals in all of which among a variety of subjects he wrote zealously in favor of international copyright."

Now for God's sake don't keep this to put into your curiosities of literature under the head of "whim whams of egotistical authors." My friend it is no *whim wham!* I have a deep design in it. The fact is I have such a devil of a bad reputation for laziness that I want to get credit in your book for every atom of industry that really belongs to me—and that without jostling the fame of other's. Who has worked harder for the last than Morris? Tell me, thou Biographic "Warwick."

"The setter up & puller down of kings"—(poetic ones)

You say in your note that your health is not better. Now then again I come in as the better judge for that most immediately concerns *you*. My dear friend I would insure your life for one fourth of the premium that I would have done a month ago. Crede Byron⁷⁷—Believe me you have scarcely a right to consider yourself an invalid further than to be careful of the health you have and see that by neglect you do not endanger it in the same way again.

Ever yours truly

N. York Jan. 11 '42

C. F. H.

N. B. Did you not promise me a revise of the verses?⁷⁸

77. Lord Byron's family motto, a byword with the literary men of Hoffman's time, naturally.

78. Hoffman is probably referring to his selections for *The Poets and Poetry of America*. This letter is in the Boston Public Library.

48. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, June 28, 1842.

N. Y. June 28th '42

Dear Griswold

I enclose you the corrected proof of the Song.—about the story I am sorry—for I like to go ahead when I get agoing at all. You must give me room though in the Sept. No.⁷⁹ not only for that but for one of the Female things I spoke to you about—It is founded on fact as is Ben Blower—Touching the latter I was talking with a friend about the [Vat?] Story in *Blackwood*⁸⁰ when he says “I [have a real] thing better than that H. I’ll hand it over to you to work. It was a Mechanic I knew in Charleston who crawled into a boiler after getting through his work about it & fell asleep there one hot afternoon. He was awakened by hearing preparations to get up steam & had devilish hard work to save himself &c—”

How’s your health? Better I’m certain! Mrs. Mowatt may dart her plumes into hearts but as to transfixing lungs with her eyes in that way tis all [gammon] By the way coming down in the steamboat with Dickens a few weeks since I told him in talking of copyright that he ought to know you—He had heard of Graham’s Magazine. I said you had told of it & were coming out for copyright & that he ought to read yr. Preface “to the Poets” He had not heard of the book though he had of Keese’s of which he spoke favorably. He said he would buy a copy if not too much hurried when he got to town. The next morning he sailed.

Ever your truly

C. F. H.

79. Hoffman’s *Song*, later representing the twenty-third day in “Love’s Calendar,” appeared in the August issue and “Ben Blower’s Story” appeared in the September number. “The Female thing” to which Hoffman refers is probably “The First and Last Parting” appearing in the October issue.

80. The story referred to is “The Involuntary Experimentalist,” published in *Blackwood’s Magazine*, October, 1837, Vol. 42, pp. 487-92.

Matthews, upon the breaking up of *Arcturus*⁸¹ sent "Primeval Woods" to the *Boston Miscellany* with my permission. They have printed *Fame* for *Fane* in the fourth line of the first stanza.⁸²

49. HOFFMAN TO JOHN KEESE, Nov. 18, 1842.

November 18, 1842

Dear Keesy:

I still date from my sofa though I did get to my office yesterday. Why do you not come and see me? I have begun to use my convalescing leisure, and in the last week have completed one stupid chapter of a novel and a poem of some three or four hundred lines which I think has some life in it though a weakling. I commenced it Thursday night and it shall be copied out fairly for the printer this Thursday, that is, if you give me professional encouragement for publishing anonymously; which I think of doing to raise the interest money on that cursed bond. It is called *The Vigil of Faith*, and the story is a devilish good one if I have not spoiled it in the telling. The dinner bell rings—Come and see me, I pray thee, Keesy,—come tomorrow night.

Ever thine,

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN⁸³

Mr. Keese,

81. *Arcturus, A Journal of Books and Opinion* was edited by Cornelius Mathews and Evert A. Duyckinck from December, 1840, through May, 1842. Nothing identified as Hoffman's appeared in its three volumes. "Primeval Woods" appeared in *The Boston Miscellany*, Vol. II, p. 33 (July, 1842).

82. In the Boston Public Library.

83. Manuscript in the Library of Brown University. John Keese was at the time of this letter engaged in editing Elizabeth Oakes Smith's *The Sinless Child*. Upon the appearance of Keese's edition of that poem Hoffman commented to the advantage of both editor and poet: "Mr. Keese certainly deserves well of the republic of letters for bringing out this singularly beautiful poem in its present dress. His frank and manly preface, with the interesting accompaniment of John Neal's biographical sketch and Tuckerman's analysis of the genius of the author, awakened in us a strong and lively expectation as to what was to follow; and so perfect and pleasurable is the realization of both interest

50. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Jan. 1, 1843.

Dear Griswold:

January 1, 1843.

I have obtained for you a copy of Mrs. Smith's "Captive." It was, you know, written some years since, but only printed within the last two or three. I think it shows in many parts the promise of the remarkable powers she has since developed, and is daily maturing. As for good grounds to put her in the book—the fact of so few of her things having been collected into a volume, I think, has nothing to do with it. That is an affair of Booksellers, not of Editors. It belongs to the trade of publishing, not the art of writing.

I yesterday looked over a bundle of her printed articles which would fill several volumes, though less than half of what she has written. Her finest tale is, I think, "The Flower Girl of Antioch" (in the *Opal*). Her most original one "Machineton" while "The Love Quarrel," differing as much from both of them as they do from each other, makes a remarkable trinity of varied powers in this department of art. Her "Riches Without Wings," one of the first of those little books for young people which have since become so popular, still continues to run, I am told, side by side with the best of them. Yet how different the style and object of this little treatise from those of her multitudinous essays!

No, I think the author of "Riches Without Wings," "The Sinless Child" and "The Western Captive" (three regular volumes) upon the score of delicate humor alone, the rarest trait among American authors,—will have no occasion to feel awkward on your list.

Why, Charles King, one of the most fastidious critics I know, thought "The Witch of Endor" "perfectly sui generis," and I should like to know another woman in the country, (or man out

and expectation that we are half-disposed to cry 'Eureka!' and declare that The American Poem has at length been produced by our fair countrywoman." (J. C. Derby, *Fifty Years among Authors, Books and Publishers*, 1884, pp. 545-46.)

of it since Charles Lamb is dead) who could have written "the Sentiment of Friendship." See, too, the graceful and tender metaphysics of the "Sentiment of Self Sacrifice." I send you herewith all of these pieces, and I have tried, but in vain, to get her essay on "Egypt," which for richness and fullness of language and description would make a fine oriental accompaniment of "The Flower Girl of Antioch." I have been unable to get either of her papers upon Shakspeare, which, though unsatisfactory from their brevity, are singularly happy. I do hope you will find room for all I have mentioned, for "fame is money" to an author, and so much industry and so much desert with all the surroundings so uncheering make—but I know your feelings about this matter—and that the fact of Mrs. S. having none of these advantages of position which enable her to command a publisher, and being therefore compelled to "utter" herself in the magazines, derogates with you in no way from her claims as an approved woman of genius.⁸⁴

Thine ever,

[C. F. HOFFMAN]⁸⁵

51. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Feb. 10, 1843.

Dear Griswold

N. Y. Feby 10th '43⁸⁶

I am pained to have you write so about your health—"Death" as you say may be "no unwelcome friend of yours"—But your

84. Griswold included Mrs. Smith in his later editions of *The Poets and Poetry of America*. In his "The Intellectual History, Condition and Prospects of the Country" in *The Prose Writers of America* (Philadelphia, 1849, pp. 13-52), Griswold said: "Mrs. Elizabeth Okes Smith is a woman of a most original and poetical mind, who has succeeded, perhaps better than any other person, in appreciating and developing the fitness of aboriginal tradition and mythology for the purposes of romantic fiction" (p. 34).

85. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-30. The manuscript of this letter was not found in the Boston Public Library.

86. Jacob L. Neu in "Rufus Wilmot Griswold," *Studies in English*, No. 5 (University of Texas Bulletin No. 2538, pp. 101-65, October 8, 1925) quotes from this letter but wrongly gives it the date of February 19 (p. 126).

living friends think so much more of you than he can that he has no claim upon our hospitality or good feeling. *Death & you friends!* The proposition's absurd—Think only of the *Lives*⁸⁷ you have attempted, and the many more you will yet succeed in taking!—You are *rivals* man! and must keep as far aloof from each other as possible—Seriously though, you are just at the period of life when a man's constitution changes & if you fight the next 18 months through, with a stout heart you will live to be as burly as a Bishop and publish at 80 "Griswold's Recollections of his own time"

"This" says a Review of 1890 "is one of the most curious works that the venerable & respected author has given to the public. The two or three great poems which the present generation has produced has not made us unmindful of that general glow of letters which suffused the face of the country during the youth and memorable early manhood of the illustrious writer. Poetry seems then to have been so universally the language of sentiment that the semifabulous stories of the Italian *improvisatori* of a former age become almost realized in that Springtime Season of our yet Nascent Republic . . . Perhaps indeed no fraction of the present work will more interest the philosophical reader than Mr. Griswold's curious account of the sudden & wonderful growth of that periodical literature which now constitutes the richest and most classical portion of American letters. Our readers must examine for themselves to see how this venerable authority disposes of the much vexed question whether or not his associate GRAHAM was really the *founder* of a system of publication which produces such wonderful results or only attained his present celebrity by carrying it farther than others. As in the case of all other distinguished names we think it can be shown that much of Grahams reputation is owing to circumstances of which he had the energy & ability to take advantage. Mr. G admits that in the year 1842 his famous

87. In 1841 Griswold had published his *Biographical Annual*, and in 1842 had given a brief biography of the authors included in *The Poets and Poetry of America*.

magazine had not yet attained a circulation of above 100,000 copies. It was at that time merely a work of taste and entertainment. But early in the year 1843 a now forgotten publication which we learn from these memoirs was entitled "The Lady's World of Fashion" having attempted to compete with him in the matter of pictorial illustration he instantly took new & stronger ground & became through his vigorous corps of contributors the *leader* of literary opinion instead of the successful *follower* of public taste. It would seem that at that time there was really no one acknowledged organ of literary opinion in the country and the coldness with which Graham seized upon the position and the almost miraculous success with which he maintained it has indissolubly interwoven his name with the existence of American letters.

Ever yours

C. F. H.

P. S. Do send me that Museum⁸⁸ I had so much fun in laughing at the first one that I must see the Second. You ask me for an article: Shall I write my story illustrating the picture of the "Attack"⁸⁹—or do you mean to keep that back for awhile?—if

88. The reference is to the attacks on Griswold in *The Saturday Museum* (Philadelphia), usually attributed to Poe, but probably written by Henry B. Hirst with help from his more famous friend, in the opinion of Thomas O. Mabbott. Dr. Mabbott writes me:

"Poe, who had at first reviewed Griswold's book, *The Poets and Poetry of America*, in *The Boston Miscellany* for November 1842, with some approbation, though hardly enough to please the compiler, quarreled after Griswold succeeded him as editor of *Graham's Magazine*. Through the columns of *The Saturday Museum* a warfare was kept up for some weeks in 1843 on Rufus, the *Poets and Poetry*, and *Graham's Magazine*; and Hoffman came in for a share of denunciation as Griswold's favorite poet. The articles were apparently written by Poe's friend H. B. Hirst, but he seems to have fired the bullets Poe made. One of these articles is printed in Gill's *Life of Poe* (from clippings, not now accessible), and may be found in Harrison's edition of Poe's *Complete Works*, 1903, Vol. XI, pp. 220f. No file of *The Saturday Museum* is accessible—portions of some numbers survive. The incident concerns Hoffman hardly at all."

89. This poem, "The Attack," later published in Hoffman's collected poems under the title of "A Frontier Incident," appeared in *Graham's Magazine* for August, 1843, Vol. XXIII, p. 71. The picture, "The Attack," appears as a frontispiece to the August issue.

funds are floating about you I wish you would send me \$25—I owe my cook for the last dinner I gave to poor critics and my banker is out of town—H.⁹⁰

52. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Jan. Feb., or Mar.[?],
1843.

Dear Griswold

I have recd yr note and have just time to enclose the lines—They appeared originally in the N Y American May 1828⁹¹—My Brother Ogden always insists that this is the best thing I ever did. He was amazed at not finding it with the "Vigil" & surprised that it had been omitted among "the Poets"—the trouble is that so few wrote at that time in this vein the art of so writing was wholly deserted ten years ago.—I am sorry I have no special hint to give you about W. P. Its history is so familiar one can make but little of it.

Yours ever

C. F. H.⁹²

53. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Apr. 18, 1843.

Tuesday Ap 18 '43

Well my dear Griswold I am really glad to find so much life & spirit left in you—you are decidedly *rallying* as I always said you would. Every word that you say about editorial ettiquette having been grossly invaded is true. I can assure you however that it was nothing but blindness and stupidity in the parties offending that caused the error. Your having told Mrs. Embury or Mr. E originally that Tuckerman had written the article induced a natural

90. In the Boston Public Library.

91. The poem referred to is no doubt "Rhymes—On West Point" which appeared in the *New-York American* of May 10, 1828, and which does not appear in *The Poets and Poetry of America* or *The Vigil of Faith and Other Poems*. This undated letter was probably written early in 1843 for this poem appears in *Graham's Magazine*, of which Griswold was an editor, Vol. XXII, p. 368 (June, 1843).

92. In the Boston Public Library.

belief in Keese & T. that you hardly regarded it as editorial & when *I* recommended the use of the pieces neither of them thought of suggesting such an objection—I told Keese—(this is the way it happened) I told Keese that Neal's article was just about on a par with the general taste of the country—the very thing to *popularize* the book but that it ought not to go without a correction of some kind for “the prescious few”—Your sketch in the *American Poets & Tuckerman's* were then both fixed upon to accompany it. The matter was arranged for printing & (if I mistake not after Neal's was in hand it was seen that he had covered the same ground which you did—Whipples piece from the *Boston Times* was then put in—and I am sure that in his occasional references to me & Mr. Tuckerman—neither Mr Keese nor his co-counsellors ever thought of the grave & well founded objections which you have stated—I have read your letter to both of them—Both seemed “struck in a heap,” as I was, & we all admitted that your ideas about the use of T.'s critique should not have been taken for granted that you should in short have been consulted as to the propriety of using it under T's name—so you see I fully acknowledge the *Hitch* you have upon me—

I have not yet written a word of “the attack”—You wrote as if you wanted it by return of mail—I could not thus give it & thought my silence would be a reply—I can mail it for you by the *farthest* on next Monday morning if that will do—and possibly I may write it *this very night*—but I will not be bound save by the first mentioned hour if you can wait till then—

As to ‘the annual’⁹³ my poetic pores have been clogged up by this backward spring & other damnabilities—but I must sweat you out something—*perspire* I should have said—This wet day would be great for amatory verses—(Cats, which in Cyprus according to some authorities, they sacrificed to Venus, always choose a

⁹³. Griswold was editing at this time for Carey and Hart of Philadelphia *The Gift: A Christmas and New Year's Present*. The 1844 number has two selections from Hoffman's pen, but the 1843 volume contains nothing of his.

drizzling night for their courtship)—For amatory or anacreontic verse just the thing—but the high & holy rhyme should be built when skies are clear & Heaven shows herself open & unveiled to the view

Ever yrs truly

C. F. H.—⁹⁴

54. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, June 12, 1843.

Mondy Morg June 12 '43

Dear Griswold:

I recd yr package of proof on Saturday—put the required piety in mine & returned it to the Tribune office in time for the Southern Mail. But my dear fellow I must certainly see proof of an article set up for such a work as the *Opal*! ⁹⁵—I sent also "The Attack" corrected for Graham.⁹⁶

Mrs. Oaksmith's story was also duly attended to ⁹⁷—What a grand affair it is!—Most affluent in language—Most finished in expression—She certainly rises every day & must according to your prophecy & mine take a stand out of hooting distance of any others of our writing women—that is if her constitution be strong enough for the necessary mechanical labor of triumphant authorship—The town is at this moment all agog to see the president—a Hyperborean cold keeps him quiet.

Ever yours truly

C. F. H.⁹⁸

94. In the Boston Public Library.

95. *The Opal, A Pure Gift for the Holy Days* contained several contributions from Hoffman (see p. 325 below). It was edited in 1843 by N. P. Willis, and later by John Keese.

96. This poem accompanied by a frontispiece "engraved expressly for Graham's Magazine" appeared in Vol. XXIII, p. 71 (August, 1843).

97. "Jack Spanker and the Mermaid" by Elizabeth Okes [sic] Smith also appeared in the August issue of *Graham's Magazine* (Vol. XXIII, pp. 68-71). Hoffman had probably read proof for this article.

98. In the Boston Public Library.

55. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, 1843.

Monday 2 o c P M

Dear Griswold,

The terrible accident of the drowning of poor little Willetts Keese has kept me at Brooklyn for the last day or two & I have been nearly worn out with baneful excitement. I forgot you entirely till I came to my office this morning. To keep my promise I have stolen an hour from Uncle Sam. If the promise hold good—the result should be “sweet”—At all events you cannot complain for I have manufactured both fact and fiction to give interest to your picture—Let me see proof.

Ever yours

C. F. H.

I have an article—“yellow jack”⁹⁹ which I may send you tomorrow. Mr. and Mrs. Keese are both tolerably composed. But the sense of anguish at their house has been indescribable.¹⁰⁰

56. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Jan. 24, 1844.

My Dear Griswold

N. Y. Jan 24th '44

I have been daily expecting to hear from you—Do for Heaven's Sakes tell me the result of yr enquiries about Greyslaer from Lea & Blanchard Can I realize anything in that quarter

I really have a great curiosity—no an *interest*—to see you just at this moment—How go the Sentimentalities—How the women have affected yr condition it irks me to know They handle all of us hardly enough but Gad when they get hold of a chap of yr poetic temperament they use him up completely—at least for a while—But it is in these intervals these off days of the ague of female bedevilment that “yr whoreson Poet” doth the most work—a

99. “Yellow Jack” appeared under Hoffman's name in *The Opal, A Pure Gift for the Holy Days*, ed. by N. P. Willis, New York, 1844, pp. 148-72. As *The Opal* was published late in 1843, the letter must be of that year.

100. In the Boston Public Library.

capital relief you have from the excitement turning round at once to attempt people's lives¹⁰¹ How many biographies have you written—But I wont say a word more lest you forget that this is a *business* letter although from lack of change it will cost you a shilling

Ever yrs truly

C. F. H.

I recd lately a letter from Mr. Graham which I have deferred answering only because I wish to write to him at length—The story¹⁰² he asks for shall be forthcoming. One idea I would suggest to him about his magazine is to arrange his authors on the cover as

“MONTHLY CONTRIBUTORS”

A B C &c

QUARTERLY CONTRIBUTORS

E F G &c

OCCASIONAL CONTRIBUTORS

H I J &c

It would give people an assurance of what they might really expect, and take the use of names out of the sphere of unmeaning puffery & consolidate the character of his work¹⁰³

57. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Jan. 27, 1844.

Sat Jan 27 44

My Dear Griswold

I was just roaring over an article in the Foreign Quarterly upon “The Poets & Poetry” when I recd. your melancholy letter—I pray you turn to that paper at once & it will put you in good humor. Jno Bullism in perfection is to me always the most amusing thing in the world—My bump of benevolence is unfor-

101. See p. 223 above.

102. This story was probably “The Fate of the Humming Bird,” which appeared in *Graham's Magazine* for September, 1844, (Vol. XXV, pp. 97-99).

103. This letter is in the Boston Public Library.

tunately so great that fond as I am of the grotesque human absurdity more often awakens compassion than fun in me. I feel greater pity than diversion at Don Quixotes troubles, but the fanatical conceit of a real Sancho Panzaic Englishman is to me always delicious. I have only as yet read the first part of the article as copied ("to be concluded") into the *New World*.¹⁰⁴ Bryant tells me that I get a more savage mauling than anyone else in the article—I plagiarise it seems from Tom Moore!—A devilish good fellow to steal from—Shows my taste—I wonder they don't appreciate him more in that way at home—Hope the article will bring Moore in notice there—I must tell you though that this Mad Bull—who, with the most solemn unconsciousness lashes his brother Briton of the *N Y Herald* for writing with the same choice reserve of language that he himself uses—This Mad Bull I say stumbles upon our Capital while thrusting his horns into you "Mr Griswold admits that in America *utility* was all in all at the beginning & Poetry nothing. *They began at the wrong end!* In all other countries poetry appeared first and utility afterward, the slow fruit of success & experience"—

But you must read the article, 'tis the best advertisement of your Book yet out; for the fellow abuses the country so roundly that the people roused to a discriminating ire must at last take the poets under their protection as a part of themselves—Here's a remark that will show you the fellows frantic stupidity—"This journal failed & Freneau went to Sea in command of a Merchant vessel; *qualification being as little required in commanding an American vessel as in writing American poetry*"!—Ah, my reverend friend our corners are rubbed off so in this country by habitual attrition with emigrants from every nation that we should

104. The publication entitled *The New World*, edited by Park Benjamin, Vol. VIII, pp. 99-101 (January 27, 1844) contained the first installment of this article, as copied from *The Foreign Quarterly Review*. The article was concluded in the issue of February 3 (Vol. VIII, pp. 129-34).

not judge these redoub[t]able islanders too harshly—Yet I admire your boldness in going as a Missionary among them—What in god's name can you do there—Take them out of their Mechanism & Shop keeping and they are of Beotian [sic] Stupidity—Genius transcendant as it has been there, is but an excrescent Refinement but a *veneering*; neither of them permeating or forming any essential part of the coarse-grained character of that the most useful and most powerful but most ungenial race that the world has ever produced—You shd ask yr. friend Herbert about this matter before you go there. Any Englishman of Rank, (that is belonging to the "Excrescency" or the "Veneery") will tell you the same thing when put upon his *voir-dire* over a cup of old Monongahela though he might fight you the next morning for reminding him of it.—But what the Deuce are you so "down in the mouth" about? (This phrase dates from Jonah's time) Didn't you expect to be sad & used up for a time after so much sentimental excitement?—Of course My dear fellow a prostration of all elasticity would follow. Nor would I shake you for giving away to it for a while. But my dear Griswold, no man of sense can grieve long save for the loss of *the true & the earnest* lost to him by some fault or lackes [sic] of his own. I have before now seen a friend nearly distracted at the loss of a woman whom he confessed it was insane to wish to marry. "I see the evil I have escaped said he but I cannot imagine the *good* that is to follow—I foresee no *peace*. I ask for no good save something that will allay the present aching of my soul. It is not 'hereafter' of which I think but "the *now*" that is terrible today" "Well" quoth his comforter "Thousands of men of sensibility around us are daily passing thru just such an ordeal as you consider a sorrow peculiar to yourself" "Men who think themselves mad too as I do." "Yes, just such fellows, lots of 'em.

Ever yours,

H.¹⁰⁵

58. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, 1844.

N. B.¹⁰⁶

I send you a copy of the *Rover* with "*the Declaration*" as emended in it—To go among "Early Miscellanies"¹⁰⁷

P. S. This letter has missed the post—Please correct (upon correction of yesterday's proof) instead of

Stanza 24 Line 8th

Like winged sunshine glancing told

Read

Like winged sunshine, flickering, told.¹⁰⁸

59. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Apr. 13, 1844.

Saturday—Ap 13. '44.

My Dear Griswold

I have recd. proof of the concluding songs of *Eros & Ante*¹⁰⁹—which I return to you today—You will see that I have added one so as to complete the magical number of 33. But my Dear Sir, as it was with the *Vigil*, some proofs have missed me—"Thoughts Thoughts"¹¹⁰ was the last song I corrected before. I do wish you could get me a complete set of revises from the beginning, including the preface, to correct at my leisure.

Your friend Janvier is a very gentlemanlike fellow. He speaks with real cordiality of you—Your friends here all made earnest

106. It is impossible to tell definitely to what letter this "N. B." belongs. It is written on the back of an envelope.

107. "The Declaration" appears in *The Echo* among the group captioned "Early Miscellanies." Since this appeared early in 1844 the letter must belong to that year also. The emended version of the poem has been found in *The Rover*, Vol. ii, p. 393, March 2, 1844.

108. In the Boston Public Library.

109. "Love's Calendar, or Eros and Anteros" was the complete name of the group of love poems representing the days of the month.

110. "Thoughts—wild thoughts! oh why will ye wander," is the first line of stanza twenty-six of "Love's Calendar"; this stanza is in effect a separate poem representing the twenty-sixth day of the month.

enquiries about you on my return, and if you only keep out of love I see nothing to disturb yr growing in favor with woman & man. Mr Verplanck has again attacked me for not bringing you to dine with him & have a book talk—and I promised him that you would be on hand soon.

Graham's last No. makes a great show. I sent him a prairie sketch yesterday for the plate ¹¹¹—Thank you for jogging my elbow.

Ever truly & Cordially

C. F. H.¹¹²

60. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Apr. 20, 1844.

N. Y. Saturday Ap. 20 '44

My Dear Sir

"My sufferings is intolerable at not being able to penetrate the interior" Mr. VanBuren's when he penned this classical sentence *was* nothing to mine—Do my letters ever reach you? Have you gone to Washington—Are you ill?—Bewomanized?—Or what in all thunder is the matter with you & the mails & the proof sheets?—Mr. Janvier told me yesterday that some time since you said a book by yr Hble Svt would be out in a week—I have not seen ten pages of proof of such a book! & those that I have seen were not consecutive—For the Preface the very eye and front of these poetic offendings I have asked you again & again in order to correct the somewhat hastily written paper—or else adopt it word for word as originally written—Now my dear Griswold I conjure you to let me see a proof of this part of the vol. at least, *at once*—One of my objects in visiting Phila was to overhaul the copy & see if the prose with which I had introduced it bore not too egotistically upon what followed—I swear the thing

¹¹¹. This sketch was evidently "The Fate of the Humming Bird," which is accompanied by a plate "engraved especially for *Graham's Magazine*" called "Hunting Buffaloe."

¹¹². In the Boston Public Library.

has run in my head till the difficulty of getting at you or the papers, has become a perfect [*Jumbic?*] or bore—spirit to me—haunting & vexing me.

Understand me my excellent friend Let me but see proofs of what is done—and a clean revise of them afterwards & you may hold back the book itself to publish among my posthumous papers if you choose in “Griswold’s Memoirs of his own Times”

What a warm earnest and excellent friend that gentlemanly young Janvier is of yours. If you can get a woman to understand you as thoroughly and be at the same time as really attached as he is you will not have served the sex in vain—Tuckerman & I have both taken to him exceedingly. I pray you write soon to—

Yours ever

C. F. H.¹¹³

61. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Apr. 24, 1844.

My dear Sir,

Ap 24. 44

I am really very sorry to trouble you so often, but if you will give me the address of your printer with your permission to write a line to him, I think by paying the necessary office charges I might obtain a proof of that preface¹¹⁴ for which I have asked you so often. I wish to alter it essentially in lieu of cancelling it altogether—which as it *stands* I am now bound in good taste to do. In the first place “The Vigil &c” has been noticed in England far more favorably than ever it was here & whatever I may say to my Special Reviewer of the F. Q. it ill becomes me to act at Random among his brothers. In the second place I have had a conversation with the Editor of the Knickerbocker in which he utterly disclaimed the slightest possible intention of “adopting” or giving *injurious* currency to the charge of the F. Q.

¹¹³. In the Boston Public Library.

¹¹⁴. This evidently refers to the “Preface” of *The Echo* which was published in this year to refute the charge of plagiarism of *The Foreign Quarterly*. (See pp. 142-57 above.)

Now my dear Griswold if you care about the letter going in *at all* pray send it to me to modify these points, otherwise I wish *to cancel it*. But I will not trouble you again about it if I have your permission to apply to your printer—or stay—send me the *original* copy & I can return it to you with the necessary corrections.

I recd. one page of proof on Monday which was straightway returned to you.

Truly yours

C. F. H.

N.B. If you see Mr. Carey I wish you would ask him if he recd. a story I forwarded thru' Graham's office on Friday last.¹¹⁵

62. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, May 27, 1844.

Monday morning May 27 '44

My Dear Griswold

I have just Recd. a piece of proof from you about which there must be some mistake—When I handed you a copy of the lines suggested by an Indian Head¹¹⁶ &c I told you they would appear in the Democratic Review for June—I thought before now you would have had occasion to use the copy for the vol. of Poems.

The proof recd. today looks like the imprint of Graham—and thinking Mr. G might be disappointed I have tried to supply their place with some other verses—But my muse halts most —ly this morning—I pray you attend to this matter at once—I long since corrected proof of the same piece for the Democratic.

I fear we shall lose Janvier¹¹⁷ which I regret exceedingly—

115. In the Boston Public Library.

116. "Brunt the Fight"—suggested by an embalmed Indian head—appeared in *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, Vol. XIV, p. 633 (June, 1844).

117. Francis D. Janvier, a merchant, was the father of both Margaret Thomson Janvier, author of books for children written under the nom de plume of "Margaret Vandegrift," and Thomas Allibone Janvier, also the author of several books.

He expects to visit Phila on thursday most probably not to return. If so I shall almost despair of yr coming to take rooms at Brooklyn & so the whole of that pleasant plan falls to pieces. I do really much much regret it—for the sake of all parties—As for Janvier the fellow has made his society almost necessary to me—So necessary that I still hope that his plans will permit him to remain—But if compelled to return to Phila. I do protest against your giving up the Brooklyn project as a necessary consequence.

Ever yours truly

To R. W. G

C. F. H.¹¹⁸

63. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, June 11, 1844.

N Y June 11. '44

"What has become of your songs &c so often announced as in press during the last year? I thought they were to be published long ago!"

My Dear Griswold—

The above is an extrect. from a letter just recd by yr Hble Svt. What indeed *has* become of the Poems?—It is now more than a week since I recd. proof and there were yet two or three pages of the *Occasionals* wanting to complete that division of the book, comprising, if you recollect aright, "The first & last Parting" "Brunt the Fight" "Waller to Sacharissa" a sonnet and "Primeval Woods"—The Fourth of July is now at hand when all the world are travelling and light literature is in best demand—Stir yourself up old fellow—For George¹¹⁹ I'm afraid some woman has got hold of you again—

What the Deuce has become of Janvier—Here are some half a dozen people wasting their sympathy upon an unanswered interest in his movements—Hath he caught yr trick of epistolary Mumness

¹¹⁸. In the Boston Public Library.

¹¹⁹. This phrase is almost illegible, and the interpretation is doubtful.

just when his friends wish to know his whereabouts?—I pray you write me touching the lad—

In abundant haste & some impatience—but not too much

Yrs truly

C. F. H.

R. W. Griswold

—Don't swear at my ruled paper—'Tis the latest "fashion"—as Willis¹²⁰ may perhaps tell the world in his lecture tonight on that estate at the Tabernacle—I do hope you have not abandoned the idea of coming to live in Brooklyn—Tis delightful there now though we really miss Janvier—Cool—fragrantly airy, and no Mobs!—I am really in a state of anxiety in expectation of a paragraph like this.

"Signal vengeance & irremediable devastation. The destruction of Dr. Moriarty's library wounded most deeply the literary sensibilities of our Irish population,¹²¹ and though from policy hitherto silent upon the subject we have nightly anticipated such a catastrophe as that which it is our painful duty here to commemorate—The valuable library of the Reverend R. W. Griswold the distinguished Protestant clergyman who lately abandoned all his other literary labors to devote himself to an anti-Catholic Review was last night consumed by an Irish mob. The light from the blazing books & MS. illuminated the whole Delaware and part of Chestnut Street and was seen by the evening train within a mile of Baltimore. We regret to hear that Mr. G was slightly injured by throwing himself into the scene of devastation. It seems that some of his most precious MSS were kept in a bathing tub and attempting to gain the house through the back way his hands were terribly cut while in the act of dashing in the windows of a water-closet. The presence of mind of his friend D H Janvier Esq in

120. Nathaniel Parker Willis delivered this lecture on the subject of Fashion before fifteen hundred people (*The New-York Evening Post*, June 12, 1844).

121. For the Native American and Irish riots of 1844 see J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia*, 1884, vol. I, pp. 663-73.

seizing him by the skirts of his coat at this instant alone prevented the Rev Gentleman from being smothered by the tainted smoke which at once rushed through the aperture."

N. B. Since writing the above we learned that at least one half of Mr. G's MSS are safe—They were in the pockets of old coats, hats &c left from time to time at the houses of his friends. We need not say that all good citizens should frown upon this, not unprovoked, but certainly disorderly conduct of our generous but somewhat excitable adopted citizens. The exemplary character of our beloved city must ultimately suffer from these occasional outbursts of misdirected popular energy."¹²²

64. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, 1844[?].

Friday Night

Well—God be praised dear Griswold I have heard from you at last—I was beginning to be really alarmed lest some woman had run away with you—and for the last week or two have daily exd. the police Reports for a new abduction case—Had I known you were at Washington I should have been certain that you were on board the Princeton & had carried off the poetic immortality of others while involuntarily claiming your own.—Tuckerman interrupts me to say that he too is daily expecting to hear from you—He wishes to know *when* you propose publishing his poems—Now touching mine—I have recd. today proofs of pp 10, 11, 12 which I return corrected But my dear fellow I have seen but *one* page before ! & I pray you to let me overhaul the intermediate pages at once—Most of my corrections in the copy are on them—¹²³

Yr friend Mr. P. Hopkins¹²⁴ I have not seen since the day we

¹²². Hoffman's liking for such prophetic historical skits is also evident in his letter of February 10 to Griswold. (See pp. 227-30 above.) This letter is in the Boston Public Library.

¹²³. Since this probably refers to *The Echo* which Hoffman published in 1844, the letter belongs to this year.

¹²⁴. Evidently this means Cornelius Mathews, the author of *The Career of Puffer Hopkins*, 1842. Poe calls Mathews "Puffer Hopkins" in

discussed the Embassy—I did not then nor do I now think him the fittest person to be our minister near Washington.

Ever yrs truly

C. F. H.¹²⁵

65. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, 1844[?].

Wednesday Night

My dear Griswold

Collect your wits from among the widows for a moment and let me talk book to you. In the first place I am now determined that "The Echo" shall *go*—& go too under its present title—Therefore you will see tis worth talking about. *But* I am convinced that the friend who supplanted you so nicely with the Appleton's about the book of "Gems" has more influence with Burgess & Stringer¹²⁶ than you have. He pressed my hand with peculiar warmth when I met him coming out of there the day before yesterday—& wore an air of feeling which said "I grieve dearest friend that I must ride over you in putting down that pestiferous Griswold who threw me into an appendix, but still I must ride! Whether this be so or not however I never met with people who took hold of a thing so coolly—"Have you done anything with the book?" "We have advertised it once"—"Have you sold any?" "Three or four copies only"—"Have you sent any to the editors?" "We did not like to as we have only a hundred" "Have you sent any off to other booksellers?" "No we did not like to run the risk of having it returned to us eight months hence—"

Stringer then said very civilly that the price was too high & the form unfortunate &c. That the price was too high I fully agreed with him for several booksellers tell me the same thing.

his review of *Wakondah; the Master of Life*, 1842, in *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XX, p. 129 (February, 1842).

¹²⁵. In the Boston Public Library.

¹²⁶. The publishing firm of Wesley F. Burgess and James Stringer, 222 Broadway.

They say that at your estimate you must calculate paying for the stereotype plates with the first edition. That *twenty-five cents* is ample; that it would yield a profit on paper, printing, stitching &c. & pay the interest of cost of plates which is all that is looked for in a first edition of stereotype work! (Are you reading carefully or thinking of those cursed widows—Mind your eye & follow me on.) I then went to see Bartlett. He said he would sell it with pleasure and would be happy to have some copies on sale and hang out a board if you would send him both. He had no dealings to be sure out of Broadway but Wiley & Putnam and others could easily dispose of an edition there at 25 cents. B & S, he added, were excellent business men to circulate the book through the country *if they would take hold of it*. Well my friend they have not & in my opinion will not “take hold of it” We must trust to Zeiber¹²⁷ I suppose for this general circulation & in the meanwhile & as soon after the receipt of this as possible send on some copies to the Broadway Booksellers with any *Lindsay & Blackiston’s*¹²⁸ imprint, and a bundle for me to be left at Bartlett & Welfords for the editors the package you sent I have used up.—Respect this edict—Read it over three times & then hand it to Janvier to impress upon you. Tis a pull now between you and the worthy General about those songs which I will not permit to drag down *The Vigil*. If I meet him again I shall tell him that the book goes off so slowly I am determined to publish the songs in a cheap though highly illustrated edition by themselves and strike off 20,000 copies. Faith more than that, I’ll ask him to unite with me in the publication—perhaps then he may take his taboo off the *Echo*—Griswold Griswold why did you put him in your appendix—¹²⁹

Good-night

H.

¹²⁷. G. B. Zieber was a Philadelphia bookseller and printer. See below p. 321.

¹²⁸. *The Echo* was published by the Philadelphia firm of Lindsay and Blackiston.

¹²⁹. Griswold’s first edition of *The Poets and Poetry of America* did not allow George P. Morris the dignity of a place among the ninety

N.B. Put the book at 25 cents—No portrait *until* it succeeds—I say “until” for it *shall* if you will but be vigorous and *continuous* for a few days in following my directions. The verses *have* already succeeded separately. Is not the fagot as strong as the single rod? P.S. I forgot to say among other things that Stringer’ complained of the paper—“The paper too is not as good as Mr. Griswold promised us”—Zounds man the Echo must not be buried in such a pile of small potatoes as that on the corner of Ann Street! ¹³⁰

66. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, June 24, 1844.

N. Y. June 24th '44

Do take care of yourself My Dear Griswold & guard against a relapse—I think you had better come on here—The Sea Coast is the best ground to furnish curative air for a fevered invalid. You might stay at Fort Hamilton where Tuckerman is enjoying the air and bathing and come up to town for an hour if you choose each day. The place is accessible enough for 9 & 5 o'clock business men—or you would get capital air on the Hillside of Atlantic Street where I am staying—I pray you come hither by all means & come soon—I always get as bilious as the Devil in Philadelphia though a day or two there invariably causes a cold—’Tis a Paradise for lungs and a Hell for livers—I pray thee come out of it.

I recd two pages—no, three, actually *three* pages of Proof this morning. If I get more tomorrow, I shall think we are really getting out of the woods at last. You talk of “going to Press”—Remember My dear fellow I *must* see the *revises* afore then! There are several pages of the Vigil with M.S. corrections upon them of which I have seen no proof at all. But you have given me an iron promise of this & it is wrong to bother you with a reminder.

odd poets listed in the “Table of Contents,” but confined him to the “Appendix” with only three short poems to his credit. Later editions corrected this lack of consideration for General Morris's poetry; the correction may have been somewhat of a conciliatory nature.

130. In the Boston Public Library.

And so Janvier is gone—Why the Deuce didn't the fellow write? Commend me to him when you do that.

Touching the book again. Do you still think of using my portrait? I really wish not—certainly not in a *first* edition. If it reaches a *second* you might stick it in with any other illustrations you can lay your hands on & by dropping the preface make a new & annualish sort of book of it for the autumn trade—What think you of the idea? You could get that beautiful plate of a *Frontier Incident* from Graham—a view of West Point anywhere—a pretty woman's head for "lines to a Portrait" & lots of Indian things that would fit the Vigil & Ambuscade as well as they do most things—At all events My dear fellow reserve that *Soft & Sappy* likeness of me for a piece of bookmaking like this—and don't let it go in as a piece of self glorification along with my preface in a first edition. Make that edition as small as you please but let it go farther as a plain collection of verses put together originally for the purpose mentioned in the preface & that purpose only—List what Shines you please with the book afterwards to make it pay for itself.

Ever My Dear Griswold

Cordially yours

C. F. H.¹³¹

Rev—R W Griswold

67. HOFFMAN TO GULIAN C. VERPLANCK, July 7, 1844.

Monday July 7 '44
2 P. M.

My Dear Sir,

Finding a perfect panic in the C H I have just seen Mr Curtis who tells me that no one's head is safe and advises me to get a line from you to the new collector as soon as possible I got my office you know through Ogden's political influence. But Robt Tyler in writing lately to O'Sullivan of the Dem. Rev. to prove

¹³¹. In the Boston Public Library.

his father's patronage of letters mentioned that Mr Irving had been appointed to Spain & C Hoffman to the Custom house on this score!!!—Perhaps he meant that I was kept there on these non combative grounds How far they may avail me now I don't know but however important in carrying up an appeal to the throne at Washington they would weigh little I fear against a Tammany Hall influence

You my dear Sir who by letting Mr Polk back your measures in Congress have brought him before the Nation in such a way that even in Remote Tennessee he controls the N Y Custom House have only to let his folks know *sic vos non vobis* &c (literally translated "That's my Thunder") & put me on the happiest terms with Governor Van Ness. Two of his nephews are already seated at their desks, and the building is this morning filled with people in favor of a simple Poll tax and anxious to do away with Customs Houses in general while reserving a desk or two for them in this one in particular.

In haste & Trepidation

Affectionly yours

C. F. HOFFMAN ¹³²

N. B. *News for the Ladies* George Duer is engaged to his cousin Catherine Robinson!

68. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, July 13, 1844.

N. Y. July 13th '44

Dear Griswold

I recd. a bundle of proofs early this week which left but one poem ("Forest Musings"—See Griswold's *Am Poet*) to finish the book—I am disappointed, though I ought not to be, in not getting the last page and the promised revises by today's mail—Since the *last time* you promised me that "the work should certainly be *driven* through in a week," that is since the 4th of July I have

¹³². Original in the New York Historical Society. This letter has no address and no indorsement.

corrected 55 stereotype pages from MS matter for a Boston Publisher. These last went "through" in less than a week without being "driven." Whether this difference in the mode of doing things is between the different character of the respective *publishers* or between the energetic atmosphere of *Boston* and that of *Philadelphia* or between the continuity of action of *Jared A. Sparks* & that of *Rufus W. Griswold* you can determine better than

Your Friend,

C. F. H.

N. B. Will you allow me now to put a simple request to you. I have wanted again & again a revise or impression of some kind of those verses, I wish two copies one to correct & return to you & the other for an *especial use*—Can or can not these be obtained? and is it troubling you too much to ask you to obtain them for me *forthwith*? I hoped three months ago to have sent one impression of the book to a friend in England and then the publication might have been kept back here till [MS. illegible] Time if not made when the thing was first intended to appear.

Again I beg of you as a personal & Particular favor to send me two complete impressions & I will bother you no more.

H.¹³³

69. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, July 18, 1844.

July 18 '44

My Dear Griswold

Will you favor me with the address of the Printers of "Hoffman's Poems"?¹³⁴ I am about making a trip to Nahant and if by writing to him I can get a set of revises before going Eastward it will save me the trouble of visiting Philada in the first instance. You will excuse my troubling you so soon again with a letter but I

¹³³. In the Boston Public Library.

¹³⁴. This probably refers to *The Echo, or Borrowed Notes for Home Circulation* for in a letter dated September 24, of the same year, Hoffman thanks Griswold for his help in getting out the book.

suppose the pressure of more important engagements has prevented your attending to the urgent though slight request I made to you by letter a week since. You of course can have no objection to my applying to the printer about such an every day matter, and it is much better my dear Sir after your kind offices in starting this thing originally for me that I should thus have no further occasion to trouble you about a matter which has proved so infinitely vexatious to me—so fatiguingly annoying

As ever

I am truly yours C. F. H.

N. B. I will write a little note on the opposite page which you can cut off and hand to the printer after inserting his name. His office must be differently conducted from others to make the thing at all difficult, for I have often got impressions of the kind from Stereotype Foundry's here, and I have now lying beside me some fifty pages taken from plates which I recd. from Boston by return of mail.¹³⁵

70. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, 1844[?].

My Dear Griswold,

Wednesday morning

Your letter was brought to me from my office last evening—too late to answer it by yesterday's mail.—I am still confined to my room by my injury and know not when I can leave it—As the effects of the bruises are worse rather than better—Consequently it is out of my power to come on to Phila^{del}.—But were it otherwise my Dear fellow I should most assuredly not have presumed to appear before any public body which has not sent me a formal invitation. A man addresses a public meeting from the suggestion of friends or upon "his own hook" if he chooses—but a literary Society or Scientific Association has its regular officers appointed for the very purpose of shutting out intrusion and designating those whom it chooses for its mouthpieces; and if one's own brother

¹³⁵. In the Boston Public Library.

made "the Committee" they would not the less *officially* notify *the man what* was expected to lecture—That is if they knew what was proper or expected a gentleman to appear before them. I don't apologize to you for this dissertation upon "first principles"—for you know I am anything but a Stickler for idle forms—though there are some though which like those I have explained to you cannot be dispensed with unless a man will forget what is due to himself and the ordinary usages of Society—I do really My dear Griswold marvel much that your Philda. friends should expect any man to come on, at such an invitation—A verbal request through a *townsman of mine—himself a guest* among them!—I rather think that the amount of the whole thing is that you have been "cracking me" up there among some of your friends and they have said "Well trot him out—bring him along if he'd like to lecture We should be well enough pleased to hear what your friend has to say &c. Let me thank you My dear fellow however and most sincerely thank you for your friendly offices, while regretting that if *officially* invited, it will still be wholly out of my power to leave this city. I have been so long absent from my office and may still be kept away so much longer that I must not think of such a thing.

I would tell you to make "My best acknowledgements" *to the Committee* for their compliment except that it would be a piece of impertinence in me to thank a body of gentlemen, whose names I have never heard, for an act of kindness to which they have never plead guilty either by holding up their hands or otherwise—

I hope that your health has by this time materially improved—Those proofs ¹³⁶—Could I have them now instead of the porridges and plaisters upon my table it would lighten the ennui of this tedious confinement—

Heartily yours

C. F. H.¹³⁷

¹³⁶. This request for proof probably refers to *The Echo* published by Lindsay and Blackiston, a Philadelphia firm, in 1844.

¹³⁷. In the Boston Public Library.

71. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Sept. 24, 1844.

N Y Sep 24 '44

Thank you my Dear Griswold for your attention in sending the Echo to my different friends in Phila. Believe me I absolve you from all blame with regard to B. and Stringer's burial of the book—It has certainly been taken admirable care of in Phila—(with what result I dare not guess) but save the American not a paper has acknowledged its acceptance here. Tuckerman in his last gave me a hint of the whole matter having been "*expensive*" as well as "*troublesome*" to you; and I am now mainly anxious that you should get back your outlay with some return at least for your trouble. I have bethought me much how to do this!—The title and preface, originally very good for a pamphlet got up on the spur of the moment, certainly do not strengthen the publication after so long an interval—We would have done better by attaching them to the Songs alone in a Six Penny pamphlet "*containing Sparkling and Bright and Sixty other Songs by the Same Author*" The attack of the Reviewers was only on the Songs too, and by altering a few words in the preface this arrangement would have been altogether proper.

It may now be too late however to think of this. I have therefore altered the title page, added my final corrections to the poems and furnished an inscription in verse as a substitute for the preface. With these changes aided by the illustrations you spoke of as being accessible to you, you may yet be able to turn the plates to advantage—Possibly Mr Carey might take hold of it—Wiley and Putnam, from what their chief clerk told me, I think would be happy so to do. In addition to the illustrations you mentioned there is a plate in the Culprit Fay which would suit admirably with "Moonlight on the Hudson," and Inman told me of "Deer Hunting by Torchlight" in the Sportsman Magazine a admirable for "the Ambuscade"

I am truly yours

Rev. R. W. Griswold

C. F. H.

Give my best regards to Tuckerman and Janvier. I shall write to the former today.¹³⁸

72. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Oct. 25, 1844.

Dear Griswold,

Oct 25, 1844¹³⁹

I send you a corrected copy of the printed verses of which we spoke when last I saw you. If you use them in your book I should like to see a proof—if not I wish you would preserve this copy for me as I hate the trouble of licking the piece into shape again in case I wish to use it.

I must condole with you my dear Sir—Mr. John Neal who according to the standing advertisement on the cover of his publication has rare power of discovering talent and a most condescending liberality in fostering it when found, speaks of you in his last *Jonathan*¹³⁹ as “a Mr. Griswold—We believe that is the man’s name”—I am really sorry for you—poor fellow how do you get along without being either “discovered” or “fostered” by this Portland Magnate? Yet you are not alone in your pitiable condition. The hapless author of *Charles O’Malley*¹⁴⁰ was crushed last Saturday by the same piece of main timber.

Yrs ever

C. F. H.¹⁴¹

73. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Dec. 28, 1844.

N. Y. Dec 28 '44

Your plan is a famous one My dear Griswold. I proposed writing to you more at length about it the moment I recd your letter. But your friend Mr. Barousse has been ‘beguiling me’ of

138. In the Boston Public Library.

139. The date of this letter is written in pencil on the manuscript by some hand other than Hoffman’s. *Brother Jonathan* was a weekly magazine edited by John Neal, the first number appearing in 1842.

140. A popular Irish novel by Charles J. Lever, author of *The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer*, which Poe also denounced.

141. In the Boston Public Library.

the thing I am so long that I have now but a moment before the mail closes. Let me suggest the names of Prof. *Frisbie* and *B Hobart* to yr list if you think of extending it that of Dr. McVickar too would aid in introducing yr work into Columbia College and I certainly would balance the florid style of Bancroft with the directness of *Sparks*—Nor would your book be complete without quotations from Gouverneur Morris whom the men of his day thought a master of elegant writing. In making my selections I would choose the passages which are most characteristic of the writers (which in some instances are not the best *per se* that might be culled) Timothy Flint's description of Red River for instance in his "Francis Berrien" is happily the most *Flintish* as well as the finest passage you could quote from him. Irving's Brace Bridge Hall (in his *Annette De Larbre* I think) has a passage which is the very tip-topery of his elegance. In Frisbie's review of Byron there is a passage of rare musical cadence. In Gov. Morris you will find a blending of the epigrammatic style of Junius with much of the polished facility of the old French memoirs—and in John Randolph you have more than the biting sarcasm of Wilkes But I'm bothered and must take another time—

Ever yours truly

C. F. H.

P. S. Ere "the Poems" do go to press—pray let me see proof. Thinking that you were annoyed enough already by alterations—and wishing to add a couple of lines, which were marked among my early corrections but not I believe transmitted to you—I have had a page recast here and will send it to you next week—Your Christmas night was doleful but not more stupid than mine I turned out in the slush to rush into some place of public amusement in my desperation but they were all so crammed I would not venture—By the way though—I forgot that I wound up the evening very pleasantly at Mrs Embury's¹⁴² whither I wandered at

¹⁴². "Mrs. Embury delighted to bring around her the wits of the day and Charles F. Hoffman, Theodore Tuckerman, Julian Verplanck

9 o c and rung the bell with a trepid conviction that I would find no body at home—I did get in though and raised the mercury of my humors at last with a spirit thermometer—Videlicet—hot whiskey punch—the [MS. illegible] thing in the world for a state of sentimental crabbedness—¹⁴³

74. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Feb. 19, 1845.

N. Y. Feby 19th '45

Dear Griswold,

Do not start as at an old shadow when I write you reminding you of proof! But the Spring is already here & yesterday met one of my mountaineer friends who told me that if anything were done about naming those lakes & mountains it must be soon as several parties were "going in" this Spring who if not indoctrinated with a better nomenclature would at once begin increasing the evils of the old. Moreover *Lord's* ¹⁴⁴ *Halleck's* ¹⁴⁵ & Randolph Hulberts ¹⁴⁶ Poems are on the eve of appearing and it would be an advantage if possible to get into the trade sales before them.

You asked me when I last saw you for my opinion of some of Fay's writings—You will find it in the American Monthly in a Review of "Norman Leslie" & "Clinton Bradshaw" which Review by the by (in the body of the book) contains the passage upon the resources of *American Romance* which I spoke to you about.

Have you seen that new work by Vivian "Vestiges of the Nat with John Keese and others might often meet there." (*Selections from the Autobiography of Elizabeth Oakes Smith*, ed. by Mary Alice Wyman, Lewiston, Maine, 1924, p. 91.)

¹⁴³. In the Boston Public Library.

¹⁴⁴. W. W. Lord's poems were favorably reviewed in *The Evening Gazette*, May 24, 1845. The review was probably by Hoffman.

¹⁴⁵. In a letter to Griswold, March 6, 1845 (see p. 257 below), Hoffman says "Halleck is out." He refers to *Alnwick Castle with Other Poems* published by Harper and Brothers.

¹⁴⁶. Randolph Hulbert's *Wandering Strains from the Lyre of the North*, in the preface to which the author says he is for the first time "presenting himself before the tribunal of public taste," did not appear until 1850.

Hist of Creation"—¹⁴⁷ Tis a good deal of a book—written in a style of delightful simplicity and condensing digesting and arranging most admirably the best received Cosmogical knoledge of our day as to educe a well defined system from it. Miss Fuller's "Women in the Nineteenth Centy" begins to make some talk. There's a good story afloat about her and your friend Ralph Waldo—They were at the theater looking at Fanny Elsler for the first time—"Margaret, that is poetry!" contentedly observed this Carlislelist.

"No, Ralph that is religion!" rejoined his friend with mingled enthusiasm and rebuke.

We have a live Yankee here now by the name of Hudson who makes some stir among the Shakespeareans. There must be something in the fellow—a good deal—He is so strongly praised and so indignantly damned by different parties. His reputation, like his style is so excessively antithetical that there must be at least two strong points about him. I shall try not to hiss his next night. Onderdonkery seems gradually to become quiescent notwithstanding the new pamphlets which continue the row among a few—But there is no truth in the report that the Bishop has gone as an Indian Missionary to the *Pawknées*.

Do let me hear from you soon

truly yours

C. F. H.¹⁴⁸

75. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Mar. 6, 1845.

Thursday Mar. 6. 45

Dear Griswold,

Goldsmith's "Traveller" it is said in its six first editions was altered every time by the author. "The Vigil may claim to resemble it in one point at least—that of the writer's frequent

¹⁴⁷. This is evidently Robert Chambers's *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*, which appeared in New York in 1845.

¹⁴⁸. In the Boston Public Library.

emendations, I enclose you the last with which our [forest] friend Street who is now in town is much pleased—pray you substitute them in your “copy” in lieu of the M.S. [wafered] on page 13. When do you place it in the hands of the Stereotyper? Halleck is out. The Appletons have *Lord* of New Jersey in Press. Street is in treaty with Saxton [MS. not legible] and I fear my humble vol. will be lost in the crowd unless it comes soon to light—

I send you the Evening Gazette of today in which you will recognize my hand in the matter of a National Name¹⁴⁹—I am very much hurried but not the less truly

Yours

C. F. H.

R.W.G Esq.

N. B. If you want to talk about any literary novelties, talk in the cols. of the Evening Gazette.

P. S. Street tells me that it is with Clark & Austin he was treating & that he has made an arrangement.¹⁵⁰

76. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, May[?], 1845.

Saturday [1845]

Mr. Bigelow's blunder was really too provoking My dear Griswold—Still you'll have a famous time for a lecture next evening as all the town will be there to hear the Alghanian discussion¹⁵¹—a great deal of fun is expected—I really looked for you till the last moment, Schoolcraft & Tuckerman waited long in my office confident that you would drop in by the afternoon train—But no one was more disappointed at not seeing you than

Yours truly

C. F. H.

¹⁴⁹. See below, p. 325.

¹⁵⁰. In the Boston Public Library.

¹⁵¹. This places the letter very probably in May, 1845. This discussion reached its climax in that month.

N. B. So they have really got the poems in hand at last. I send you a copy of the *Vigil* to read proof by. I had one hundred copies struck off to send to my friends the hunters of Hamilton County with the hope, through them, of anticipating with my Indian terminology, the cockney names with which people are cursing those glorious lakes and mountains; with the exception of one copy to Schoolcraft & one to Field those I send you are the only ones that will go out of my possession in these latitudes.

Dont you think such covers as these stamped with a plain gold border & "Hoffman's Poems"¹⁵² in lieu of "the *Vigil* &c" would fix the thing for your edition?—or you might put the title running along the back & clap a hemlock tree on the side!¹⁵³

77. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, May or June [?],
1845.

Dear Griswold

It was idle in me to count upon seeing you on your return for you always go with a *rush* back to Phila. from Boston. I wish to have spoken to you about the Ballads of Seba Smith which I here enclose. He seems to me to succeed better in this sort of simple lay than anyone who has attempted it this side the water.

I send you also three pieces of mine for the New Edition, marked as they are to be inserted. The Indian Songs I furnished to Schoolcraft for his "*Oneota*"— —they are almost literal translations from the Chippewa—Algonquin—Certainly as near to the original as Bowles translations of the [Magyar] Poetry.¹⁵⁴

152. This evidently refers to the fourth edition of *The Vigil of Faith and Other Poems*, which appeared in 1845.

153. In the Boston Public Library.

154. Hoffman furnished the "Algonquin War Song," the "Algonquin Death Song" and "The Loon upon the Lake" for Schoolcraft's *Oneota*. All these are acknowledged by Schoolcraft, but the "Cradle Song" and the "Corn Song" here mentioned are not attributed by Schoolcraft to Hoffman, probably because they are of less importance. The "Algonquin War Song" and the "Algonquin Death Song" were copied by Hoffman into *The Evening Gazette*, May 31, 1845. For the "Cradle Song" and

I pray you look at the Fourth No. of *Oneota* for the "Cradle Songs" & "Corn Songs"—& Mrs. Smith's admirable "Spirit of Evil"—Schoolcraft has repaid by a very handsome compliment my zealous interest in the success of his curious Miscellany which ought to be noticed much more than it is.

Truly yours

C. F. H.¹⁵⁵

78. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, June 12, 1845.

Thursday [June 12, 1845]¹⁵⁶

My dear Griswold,

I have just rec'd a note from Mrs. Smith enclosing the following extract from her publisher Mr. Redfield

"The introduction Mr. Griswold promised to leave before he left the city but he probably forgot it. We can finish up immediately we receive it"

Mrs. S. seemed to think I could tell her something of the matter—but I couldn't. But I have already furnished the printers with a new title page as you ran off with the one I handed you. Had you not better forward your introduction to Redfield forthwith.

Touching my own proofs—I will say *nothing*—I found two letters of yours in my office coat pocket this morning one of which

"Corn Song" see pp. 311-14 below. Schoolcraft probably translated these poems for Hoffman.

Investigation reveals no "Bowles" as a translator of Magyar poetry, but Hoffman may mean John Bowring, whose *Poetry of the Magyars* appearing in 1830 is given prominence in accounts of Magyar poetry in English.

155. In the Boston Public Library.

156. The text is from the original MS. of the letter (addressed "Rev. R. W. Griswold Philadelphia"), in the collection of Dr. Thomas Ollive Mabbott. All but the first four paragraphs appear in W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 154. Griswold places this letter in the year 1844, but since the article on Scott did not appear in *The Evening Gazette* (see pp. 98-101 above) until June 9, 1845, the letter certainly belongs to that year. Also it is postmarked "June 12," and June 12 in 1845 fell on Thursday.

dated in *February* says "the Poems will be taken in hand on Monday & finished in ten days from that time" The other dated in *March* says "There shall be no delay the stereotypers will begin on Tuesday next & you shall have a copy of the book two weeks from the Tuesday following"!!!

I send you today a copy of Monday's Gazette with my remarks on Scott regarding whom I know you have never been at the pains to form an opinion though you *have* permitted yourself to imbibe a prejudice from some of the shallow dogmas of the critics of Poedom & the Lowell Institute. Read, mark, learn, & inwardly digest what I have written here. The critics upon Scott make exactly the same blunders that they do about Cooper's genius. They call Cooper too "only a daguerreotype painter of mere external life." Now to prove that he *is a creator* by a brace of arguments that would mortally offend Mr. Cooper himself

Imprimis—One of the most sailor-like old salts in the navy once said in my hearing—"Sir, Mr. Cooper is one of the first genius' that ever lived. He is no sailor sir, no sailor at all, but his sea scenes are so much like truth, and they give so much poetry to the details of my profession that I love every line he writes."

Again—A Vermonter, who is a great Hunter and Woodman, called in my office last week with a note of introduction and at once commenced talking about Cooper. "People," said he, "don't dream what that man's genius is—why now for instance he is a mighty poor Woodman and often wrong, wrong altogether, but I take his books with me on my tramps and whenever he gets in the woods I could read what he has to say forever. That's what I call genius. He makes a *Natur* of his own that you are willing to substitute for a while for real Natur."

Read my paragraphs about Scott, & you will see the application of these remarks to his poetry.

Your indulgent friend

C. F. H.

79. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, June 28, 1845[?].

The Post is in & no proof—Hoping that we should have got through this week I intended to have left town tomorrow—& fearing that this fresh delay may have arisen from your having mislaid copy I send you a list of the pieces that remain to set up—If this thing has been such a bother to you my dear Griswold as it has to me you must be pretty sick of it—

How stand you "Philadelphia air now? It must be as hot as tophet—Here we have the thermometer at 88 in the shade but a sea breeze night & morning that refreshes one nightly to go through the day—at Brooklyn there has not been a night when I could not sleep under a blanket and this morning in crossing the ferry the water was so rough that the steamer actually careened to the wind Yet I am dripping from "exuding pores" while writing this I would bet now that at the very hours when we have the breeze you have a sort of leaden "muggy" sky at Philad. and then you have a kind of *sticky* feeling under your clothes all day feeling the while as if you would like to be stripped and rubbed with lime juice and sweet oil to lubricate you—Come to the ocean banks Come to the sea-foamy tide-waters—Come snuff the brine and see the porpoises in motion—Come hither my friend while you have any liver to bring along with you and the sea sir will pickle it into health in a trice.

Yours always

C. F. H.

P. S.

Why not begin the new woman correspondent with this Song?—It is too lackadaisical for a man? Its tenderness appears to more advantage if you change the sex in the different verses and write "he" instead of "she," "him" for her. Say it were introduced in this way—

ABSENCE

By the late Gertrude Van Erinstein *

[* We trust that the promised notice of this accomplished New York Lady will be forwarded in time to accompany the touching

story from her pen that will appear in our next number. The correspondent to whom we are indebted for these interesting papers can not doubt that they will be fully appreciated.] ¹⁵⁷

80. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, June 30, 1845.

June 30 '45

My Dear Griswold

In looking over the life of Philip Freneau in your "Poets &" last evening I was struck with a chronological error which it may not be too late for you to correct in the next edition. The *father* of Freneau, you say, emigrated to America immediately after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and his son was born in 1752. Now for "father" you must have meant grandfather or great grandfather for the Huguenot settlement of New Rochelle was made before 1689. I never can remember dates but I think the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was the year previous—some seventy five years that is before Philip's birth. So that allowing his father to have been t . . . [years old when] he emigrated you wou[ld] ¹⁵⁸ . . . years old when he begot the Poet! I may here add as you do not mention the place of his birth that Philip was born in Beekman Street New York as Dr. Francis & I think Mr. Rapelye will tell you—

Do you know I think you missed it in not giving him more room—That piece "His blanket tied with yellow strings" &c should have been in. There is more of nature and poetry about him than in all the Yankees that follow till you come to Hillhouse—Dwight, Barlow were men of great intellectual vigor. But their poetry was an exercise of mental ingenuity merely—Frenau if half an ideot

¹⁵⁷. Although this evidently refers to a contemplated article in *Graham's Magazine* no such article appears. W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, gives the last part of this letter under date of June 28, 1845. The letter is in the Boston Public Library.

¹⁵⁸. The manuscript is mutilated. The signature has been cut out, and as the letter was written on both sides of the sheet, a number of words have been completely destroyed.

would still have had more poetry in the other half than could have been squeezed out of the nature of all the others boiled down to a consommé.

But 'tis near 3 and you don't—you know you don't deserve a letter from me—Here now is yours of FEBY Nineteenth "The proofs will be ready in all next week"—Still I am . . .¹⁵⁸

. . . Doctor Your Ser.¹⁵⁹

Dr. Griswold

81. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, July 11, 1845.

N. Y. July 11 45

My Dr Doctor

I saw Tuckerman last night who told me that he had recd a letter from you in which you spoke of expecting one from me in reply to something you had written lately—I really do not know to what this alludes for I have answered all your letters for some months the moment I recd. them—They generally contain something about my getting proof "next week" a phrase that seems to have about as much meaning as "Your Humble Servant" when the writer has no idea of "serving" at all—

And so as I learn from Tuckerman you publish your letters on Litre. in the *Intelligencer*¹⁶⁰—I saw an extract from one in the *Mirror*, and expected daily to receive them from you to copy into the *Gazette*. The *Intelligencer* I do not see. The *Alleghanian*, as I told Tuckerman would be a good paper for them to appear in. This paper White, who is the sole editor, tells me is getting along bravely. The *Broadway Journal* stopped for a week to let Briggs step ashore with his luggage and they are now getting up steam to drive it ahead under captains Poe & Watson—I think it will soon stop again to land one of these. Let me tell you a good joke.

¹⁵⁹. In the Boston Public Library.

¹⁶⁰. This probably refers to the *Daily National Intelligencer* [Washington], which published almost daily an anonymous column called "Notes on New Books." Search reveals no articles signed by Griswold or any one else.

Poe & Tuckerman met for the first time last night—& how? They each upon invitation repaired to the Rutgers Institute where they sat alone together as a committee upon young Ladies compositions—Odd isn't it that the women who divide so many should bring these two together!

Speaking of women, though I know her to be very agreeable yet there is certainly no such extraordinary fascination about that lady you are so engrossed with, that you should neglect matters which you took in hand long before your present fancy for her absorbed you so completely. She certainly would not think so well of you as she does if I were to tell her of your manifold breaches of promise about those proofs, a thing I can hardly avoid if she applies to me for my autograph—I have been very angry with you my dear Doctor but the matter has become too ridiculous to be angry about. I really wonder what your fair friend with the expressive eyes would think if I did consult her by letter? I won't do it though for I suppose it must be nearly a positive engagement by this time and the least ruffle affects a woman's fancy at this ticklish season.

Truly yrs

C. F. H.

Rev. Dr. Griswold

N. B. Redfield has completed the plates of Mrs. Smiths Poems. Introduction title page contents and all I saw a week ago. I believe he brings it out in August.¹⁶¹

82. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Aug. 5, 1845.

N. York Aug 5. '45

My Dear Doctor,

I have recd. a Phila paper containing one of your letters to the Nat Int. which I was upon the point of handing them as "copy" for the Gazette when upon a second look at it I found it was "No. 111" of the series. It is eloquently written but (in degree) I

¹⁶¹. In the Boston Public Library.

find the same fault with it that I did with your lecture—It is too oracularly positive. For example;—it may be true that “the learning of Webster is more varied & profound than that of Burke” but I “doubt it most d — nably”—And I or no other man would have any hesitation in giving a flat denial to so positive an assertion without troubling myself to look farther. But had you said, “and surprising as were the well known general acquisitions of Burke it is believed by many, equally familiar with the rich mental resources of both these great men that Webster alike in variety & profundity of learning is not inferior to the all accomplished Englishman. While some not without reason insist that he is immeasurably his superior. And however it may startle some of his readers who are unfamiliar with the extent of Mr. Webster’s acquirements the writer of this essay has no hesitation in classing himself with those who have challenged this comparison in favor of the gifted American”

Here is indeed a long, and cumbersome, sentiment—as you will think it perhaps, but men must be led by paths into a valley if you wish them to rest there—Not dropped from the cliffs above. If a fellow cuffed you out of a window and you fell into the most delicious bath still the first impulse would be to jump out of it. I have been reading lately a very eloquent and ingenious book “Parkers discourses”¹⁶² and shocking as the man’s infidelity *ought* to be to me—upon my word it did not stir me as much as the Yankee effrontery the cool taking—for—grantedness of some of his positions. He mistakes assumption for courage & positiveness for vigor. Barring this Yankeeism the book is a great one in its way so far as a belief and earnestness are concerned—*Suaviter in Modo, fortiter in re* is the true Maxim in writing as well as in life. In passages of mere eloquence wherein one is supposed to carry

¹⁶². Very probably this is Theodore Parker’s *Discourse on Matters Pertaining to Religion*, 1842. Parker’s belief that the love of man was the only absolute and pure religion caused many pulpits to be closed against him.

the reader or listener on with him in his impassioned excitement positiveness or "oracularity" is of course in place for the man speaks as a *prophet*, as one having authority but in didactic or character writing the case is [altered] and if he uses his *ipse dixit* too often or too strongly people always do, always have and always will revolt at it. You say in a public room "General Jackson was the greatest man that ever lived"

"The H-ll he was" answers a voice from the crowd—another man who is of the same faith in the matter with yourself—observes aloud: "How old Jackson's fame seems to grow! Upon my word we dont know but that he may figure in history a thousand years hence with Julius Caesar or the best of 'em. I have always been an out & out Jackson man and therefore my opinion may not go for much, but I do really believe that his reputation will go on growing until his greatness is acknowledged the world over and stamped by the historian for all time—Yes a reputation perhaps not inferior to that of any man who ever lived"—

But this sentence you say has no "*vigor*" in it compared with the first brief assertion. The vigor my friend is in the result, fifty men would entertain your suggestion, would give a lodgment to your idea when thus presented. While in the other case not one would think of discussing, much less of receiving your proposition. They would think only of the manner of the man that made it—not of the man to which it referred.

Have I bored you to death? Well, I am most anxious to get this thing into your mind; for I think your writings too important to have their efficiency marred by a blemish which must much limit their influence unless you will permit yourself to be brought to see the defect and to use care in avoiding it.

. . . [MS. damaged] now one word as to my proofs—The book you know was to be ready to send copies to my nephew in England by the first of August. *He returns in the Autumn.*

Last year I had a relative traveling there with the best letters whose services I might similarly have commanded in reference

to "the Echo"—He got back in the fall before the book was out which I had promised him in May.

I think we are now just about as far as we were then. Will the ultimate result be the same. If so what an utter waste & squandering is it of literary opportunities which may never recur—

That enigma upon the Letter R I would rather not insert.¹⁶³ So much has been said about my being an imitator that a piece which so clearly recalls Byrons famous enigma had better be omitted. *And I wish it left out.*—and now when shall I see the next proofs?—In my own mind I can better calculate the return of a hundred comets—By G-d Griswold all the satisfaction I ever had in giving vent to my humors by writing those rhymes could not half, no nor a quarter compensate the vexation of the last eighteen months, or two years that they have been in the press. *You* like to have everything at odds & ends. To *me* Tis a little Hell and could I blot those things out of existence entirely & thus finally terminate the matter on the instant I would have done it fifty times over rather than have this miserable sort of concern about their limping and decrepid fortunes.

C. F. H.¹⁶⁴

83. THE SECRETARY OF WAR TO GENERAL TAYLOR,¹⁶⁵
Sept. 1, [1845].

Dear Zach

Washington, September 1.

The first of Sep is at hand when you know the old Marshall said that even we might be able to move. But no waggons no

163. For Hoffman's poem "Enigma," see pp. 308-9 below.

164. In the Boston Public Library.

165. This and the two following letters are in the Manuscript Division of the New York Public Library. Though purporting to be between General Taylor and William L. Marcy, Secretary of War, they are all in Hoffman's handwriting and are interesting as indicating Hoffman's sense of humor. Inquiry reveals no such correspondence between Taylor and Marcy. This is beyond a reasonable doubt a hoax or a satire on the operations of General Taylor in the war. Hoffman may have intended publishing the letters in some newspaper but search has not revealed their publication.

money, no supplies—You might go ahead though even if the army have to lift themselves by the seats of their breeches and subsist your men upon the spoils which you get in the enemy's country.

Faithfully yours,

W. L. M.

N. B. Don't do this thing up too brown—we must make this war last & should you capture a regiment or two you must let them go again to re-inforce Saltillo, a stronghold out of which we expect to make a great deal of capital. The investment of Monterey by the way ought to last you at least for a session of Congress.

84. GENERAL TAYLOR TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR,
Sept. 25, 1845.

Sir,

Monterey, Sep 25 '45

Got your letter. Marched upon and took the place before I read postscript—Finished that while the enemy was talking about capitulation and admitted [brought] him to terms accordingly. Wait further orders.

Respc. yrs

Z. TAYLOR.

85. THE SECRETARY OF WAR TO GENERAL TAYLOR,
Oct. 15, [1845].

Washington, October 15.

Dear Zach

You're a brick! Captain Eaton has just brought up your despatch. You are too quick for us, but we are glad you did not chew up the Mexican army completely. We don't hear a word from Santa Anna and fear the snob has . . . [MS. illegible] us. Can give you no instructions as yet. But you must clap a stopper on the impatience of your boys till st A has time to strengthen Saltillo.

Faithfully yours,

N. B. You are done with the Whigs if you conquer Mexico. They swear that st. Anna will make the best expediency candidate for the Presidency in case of annexation.

86. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Sept. 23, 1845.

Office Evening Gazette
N. Y. Sep 23d—1845

Dear Griswold,

I send you herewith the corrected proofs of the poems & I pray you *to have these impressions preserved for me*. Your Philadelphia printers make such slovenly work with *printed* copy and are so inattentive to corrections that I am sick of going again and again over these pages apparently to no purpose whatsoever. We have discharged better printers from the office of the Gazette for incapacity—But enough of this—Only *let me have back these same proofs* when they have served their purpose in the printing office.

I called this morning upon Paine & Burgess (in accordance with your letter of instructions which I found waiting for me at Fishkill Landing when I returned from West Jersey). I showed them the specimen pages & the English copy. "It did not suit them. They were getting up Gen'l Morris' poems in a miniature volume. If this had been in the same style of 32 mo. they perhaps would have been glad to have had it followed General Morris', had this volume succeeded"!!!—

You made no reply to my letter stating Harper's offer. "Let Mr Griswold send on the plates to us. We will print it on handsome paper with a large margin and do our best with the book & make what we can for you & Griswold out of it thought we can't promise that it will be much—all he has to do is to send us the plates."

This after several repetitions was the last thing said to me by James & John—I said I was going out of town & would attend to it at once on my return. You must judge what is to be done in the premises for I feel a double anxiety to have your outlay fully returned to you—with profits if there be any.

Whatever you do—Had you not better do it at once?—The negotiation with Paine & Burgess having been begun before, had to be gone through with. But if the Harpers dream of any other

being attempted after their offer they too will turn the cold shoulder.

I cannot conclude this business mission without telling you how much I grieve to find you writing in such bad spirits—Why not make this business the plea for a visit here and let us cheer you up a little—

truly yours

C. F. H.

Dr. Griswold

N. B. P. & B. meant to be very civil to me but I must add a touch of their greenness which seems to me not a little—If Genl Morris' poems succeeded they would do a few selected things for Bryant & other American poets in similar volumes—Ye gods! "the Brigadier" leading Bryant! The forces of humbug can no further go.¹⁶⁶

87. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Sept., Oct., or Nov.[?],
1845.

Sunday night '45

Thank you my dear Griswold for your letter—I am very sorry that you find cutting the plates impracticable—Though I should think that if you have to set the Vigil again—the Songs &c might still be cut up. I send you herewith another Song—simple enough but the ideas are natural and freshish.

I would sympathize with you for having been ill but you write in such good spirits so good a letter & after that 'twould be sympathy thrown away—I am a little blue pillish myself withal—

Touching the Gazette—Mr. E. King makes up the paper though I do some editorials &c for him with the idea of taking hold of the paper in earnest if it succeeds—He having given me that expectation. If you would do something for the suckling—anything that you choose to send I think will go in—Saving and excepting Genl Morris Biography from Graham—which having

¹⁶⁶. In the Boston Public Library.

been already extracted in the Mirror I hope you do not wish to quote.

I saw Schoolcraft & Tuckerman yesterday. Your Hist Soc Disc. is looked for with much interest. We shall have Field's report upon baptising the county on the same night—Making a national event of the occasion—Bring on a proof of the Portrait with you and if you can stuff any other proofs of the new plates in your pocket, dont use them by the way. The enormous sale of Pile's medicine in this country is clearly attributable to the abuse of printing ink by the Americans. In England where they file and not defile their newspaper the complaint is almost unknown. If the Gazette does not succeed I have a project of a newspaper to be printed with Balsamic ink. *Ex imo ad verticum* is a motto as applicable to the public as it is to the Schoolboy when appealing to their knoledge box—faugh

Yours ever

C. F. H.¹⁶⁷

88. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Nov. 11, 1845.

Harper's Publishing House
Nov 11th '45

Dear Griswold,

Calling in here today to see if a certain volume of poems was likely ever to see the light, the Messrs Harpers tell me that the plates have been deposited with them for a week or more—But that they hold them subject only to the order of the Stereotyper having no right to publish save with his written permit. Will you by a line with the return Post, if you can, remove this Chancellor-like injunction—or tell me at least something in relation to it. The publishing Season is now nearly closed, when the rivers are frozen I suppose it will be over—Commend me to the firm of Homer Scott Wordsworth & Byron—but to win them all rolled into one ball of glory I would not shoulder another bother like that of

¹⁶⁷. In the Boston Public Library.

watching over the last years labor of this birth of my poor Ephemerals—Riker began last week to stereotype Mrs Embury's poems. They will be published next week!

Your amiable friend H.¹⁶⁸

89. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Nov. or Dec., [?], 1845.

The plates my dear Griswold are at last on the press¹⁶⁹—There were only about twenty pages to be corrected—Such words as "Ting" for instance instead of Tinge "Uprisings" instead of "Upsprung" "Dreykink" instead of Duyckinck" which I distinctly remember more than once correcting—Well the bother is surely all over, and my only anxiety about the publication is to see your outlay fairly repaid with interest—Though of a truth the thing ought to set the North River on fire to make a fair compensation for the trouble—I grieve to find you writing in such fevered spirits—I think you had better come on here for a short visit.

Yours ever C. F. H.¹⁷⁰

90. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Dec. 29, 1845.

Dear Griswold, N. Y. Dec 29. 45

I have had a package of "Excelsiors" directed to you to send to such of your friends as you choose. Can you not furnish a brief obituary of your friend Maria Del Occidente¹⁷¹ for the next

168. In the Boston Public Library.

169. This probably refers to the fourth edition of Hoffman's *Vigil of Faith and other Poems* which appeared in 1845.

170. This letter is written on the margins of the front page of *Hewet's Excelsior* (see pp. 168-69 above) as the page was at first planned. The page which actually appeared, however, was quite different from this first draft. The letter is in the Boston Public Library.

171. Mrs. Maria Gowen Brooks, the friend of Southey and the author of *Zóphiël; or, The Bride of Seven*, 1834, died near Matanzas, Cuba, November 11, 1845.

no? which will be made up a week from this date. I have laid aside a notice which I found in a Boston paper but would prefer something original from you if yr leisure permits. My poems are just beginning to move a little.¹⁷² They have so many errors which both you and I overlooked that I hope they may yet reach another edition to receive my final correction. If they do, I shall restore the greater portion of the letter addressed to yourself in "Borrowed Notes" with its original date. An ordinary dedication to you after the amicable things you have said of them in print would have been in the worst possible taste; and I did not wish to incorporate in a permanent volume my remarks upon the Quarterly intended for a passing occasion. I considered it proper too to detach your name entirely from the collection while it had one fair trial on its own merits. As I should probably however never have thought seriously of collecting these pieces unless your instrumentality had first brought them together, the merit of the publication must be yours if it ever prove worth a permanent claim. I regret much that the poems were not set forth with a more open page as in Clarkes London Edition—But that is useless—I shall take some leisure day to correct a copy and send it to you with such emendations as suggest themselves—and if you will send me a copy of the pamphlet edition I will adapt the introductory letter; so that if you wish to dig it up again when you are 60, the grave clothes of the corpse you are about then to re-galvanize will be decently adjusted. What are you doing with your pen?—That Review of Ingersoll in the Courier—worthy of *Macaulay*, as I hear *many* say—whose was it?—Is there any other R. W. G. but yourself?—Did you see Margaret Fuller's notion of Longfellow in the Tribune?¹⁷³ an admirably done thing so far as pointing out his deficiencies but wanting in justice to his merits. An additional paragraph pointing out wherein lay his real source of poetic

172. Hoffman was almost certainly speaking of the fourth edition of *The Vigil of Faith and Other Poems*, published in 1845.

173. *The New-York Tribune*, December 10, 1845, p. 1, cols. 1-3.

power, clear and undeniable—his power of personification would have set all right. White¹⁷⁴ says he will set this forth in the *Gazette* of today or Tomorrow. He had yesterday a column upon Mrs Embury & I believe is going to give the week to “the poets of the Season”—His musical criticisms have made a great stir this winter—

Ever my Dear Griswold truly yours

C. F. H.¹⁷⁵

91. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Jan. 23, 1847.

N. Y. 23 Jan '47

Thank you much my dear Griswold for your letter—“Dumbish” as it is I am most glad to hear that you are alive & kicking. But I could bet “punches for the party” that I have ten times the cause to be out of humor with the world that you have—for it treats me so badly about these days I really do not know what to do with it—Come on here and aid me in abusing it. Though I well know that your book will put you in such good humor with it before the first week of the book’s life is old, that you will be no company for so dull a fellow—You must send me a copy soon or the *Gazette* may die before it appears—It’s subscription list b’g now far gone in nervousness and the advertisements becoming scarce as good epitaphs—What a d—d unappreciative public? Be *mum* though about this my eminent disgust & the cause thereof.

So you like Tawasentha¹⁷⁶—So do I, albeit the writings of the fellow who did it seem to me just now pretty much like due-bills for the squandering of time far better spent in regular Dollar down—I wrote the first six stanzas coming down in a steamboat

174. Evidently Richard Grant White, who later became author of *Shakespeare’s Scholar*, *Words and their Usages*, and *Everyday English*.

175. In the Boston Public Library.

176. This poem published in eight stanzas in *The Gazette & Times*, January 20, 1847, under the title of “Tawasentha” was later enlarged to thirteen stanzas when it appeared in *The Literary World*, May 22, 1847, under the title of “The Forest Cemetery.”

from Albany, & sent them to the magazine—added two stanzas when correcting proof as copied into the *daily gazette* and two more upon looking it over ere going into the *County Gazette*. I enclose you therefore a complete copy of the whole & promise to add no more to it. If it should appear in Neal's *Gazette*¹⁷⁷ as you tell me, I wish if not too late you would read proof by the parts enclosed.

What mean'st thou my friend by saying you have "a *bad disease* of which you never will be cured." "*The bad disease*" is cured every day—and I know well that you have nothing worse than that. Pshaw—bothers—Man. Come on here—or go to Albany where there are lots of motives for books in the new library & where Street will give you wondrous welcome.

This "living at towns[?] in perfect isolation"—would kill a Buffalo—leave the quiet western village in which the blue devils of monotony throttle you and come hitherward to the crisp sea shore—Here comes proof—to be corrected for five or six hundred readers only—and I must leave you—though after so rude a volleying I would add anything kinder from yours dear Griswold

Most truly & cordially

C. F. H.¹⁷⁸

92. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Jan., Feb., or Mar., 1847[?].

Monday morning¹⁷⁹

Dear Griswold

I have just got your letter written evidently in the dumps—Why my dear fellow the Lit. World critic will help the book—Everyone says so. I got my copy from Wiley & Putnum on Saturday (but *without the plates* mentioned in your note)—The book

177. This probably refers to *Neal's Saturday Gazette*, a Philadelphia literary newspaper.

178. In the Boston Public Library.

179. The reference to Carey & Hart's "Generals" indicates this letter was probably written early in 1847.

is very unequal, but as a whole it will raise your literary reputation to a point it never reached before; for as a whole it undoubtedly does great honor to your pen—Rest in peace and await the results.—I think you did wrong in omitting MacKenzie & Stephens,¹⁸⁰ and this is the only essential error. As a matter of policy as well as arrangement I would have omitted the female writers altogether and promised them “in another volume if this met with encouragement”—Such a volume, with plates of the prettiest, would have sold even better than “the poets.” You are right about Carey & Hart’s “Generals”—The Harpers have announced them some time since by Headley,¹⁸¹ as I am informed and the Ex-Mayor tells me it is nearly ready. Did you see the Rochester American’s flourish about the Prose writers? What a long-eared thing is John Public!—Had you announced an additional volume of P.W. as “in course of preparation” your assailant would have been choked off—but then the present vol would not have been abused into uni-

180. Hoffman doubtless means Alexander Slidell Mackenzie, author of *A Year in Spain* and *Popular Essays on Naval Subjects*, and John Lloyd Stephens, the celebrated traveler. Later opinion seems to confirm Griswold’s judgment in leaving these men out of his book.

181. In September, 1846, Carey and Hart wrote Rev. Joel Tyler Headley suggesting that he write for them *The Generals of the American Revolution*. Headley, after replying that he would discuss the matter with them, did nothing for Carey and Hart but went over to Messrs. Baker and Scribner and used the suggestion for this publication with that firm. Carey and Hart, not knowing this, secured Rufus W. Griswold to edit their work. Accordingly both books, Headley’s *Washington and his Generals* and Griswold’s *Washington and his Generals of the Revolution*, appeared almost simultaneously with Carey and Hart claiming that Headley had not played fairly with them. In justice to Headley it should be stated that in 1846 he had published with success *Napoleon and his Marshals*, which probably gave the idea to Carey and Hart.

In his diary for September 16 Griswold says, “Tonight have finished *Washington and the Generals of the Revolution*, of which I have written about one third, for little money and no reputation.” (W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 230.) Carey and Hart showed unusual magnanimity in a letter of October 13, 1847: “but as you have had, we acknowledge, a great deal more trouble with the work than I expected, we will place to your credit \$150 instead of \$96.” (W. M. Griswold, *op. cit.*, p. 231.)

versal circulation as it will be. Notoriety & Reputation are nearly identical in book—character, in this country. Bide your time and all will come right says

Yours truly

C. F. H.¹⁸²

93. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, July 24, 1847.

Saturday, [July 24, 1847]¹⁸³

Dear Griswold—

Have just got your letter—Of the book I have seen nothing save when you showed me a copy—From that examination only, I wrote the notice which you will find in today's paper and which was in type when your letter came to hand—I shall look in at Wiley & Putnam's on my way uptown—

Touching the generals I will do them for Carey & Hart with my name, but you must make the bargain for me as to terms—I will take Sc[h]uyler & Greene if the terms suit¹⁸⁴—How long must the Sketches be?

In haste Ever truly yours

C. F. H.

P. S. in the Gazette today you will find the character of one of our late generals already drawn to your hand.¹⁸⁵

182. In the Boston Public Library.

183. The date of this letter is determined by the "P. S.", which states that "the Gazette today" contains "the character of one of our late generals already drawn to your hand." *The Gazette & Times*, Saturday Evening, July 24, 1847, p. 1, col. 7, contains an extended review of H. Montgomery's *Life of Major General Zachary Taylor*, 1847.

184. Hoffman probably did not "do" these generals for Carey and Hart. The work was edited by Griswold and no authors are named for the sketches of any of the generals. However, the copy of *Washington and his Generals of the Revolution* in the New York Public Library has marginal notes by some one evidently familiar with the authorship of the various sketches, none of which is assigned to Hoffman.

185. In the Boston Public Library.

94. HOFFMAN TO BAYARD TAYLOR, Oct. 30, 1847.

Office Literary World

October 30, 1847

My dear Sir,—

Your letter of the 19th interested me much. I like your idea of "coming up to the capital," as did the worthies of literature in Johnson's time. Griswold tells me he has written you offering something to do. I wish I could offer you a certain and permanent engagement upon this paper; perhaps we may hereafter. Meanwhile, if an engagement for the months of November and December of five dollars a week upon the miscellaneous department of the "Literary World," or for one review a week, will advance your object, I pray you to consider it settled. I write in great haste, with business and business people pressing, so you must not gauge my interest in your plans by this brief note from

Yours hurriedly

C. F. HOFFMAN ¹⁸⁶

95. HOFFMAN TO ABRAHAM HART, Nov. 16, 1847.

Office Literary World

New York, November 16th, '47

Dear Sir:

I have just received your note and sent the desired corrections to the printing office. Let me assure you I never dreamed the purport of my expression might be misconstrued much less could I be guilty of taking a liberty with your name that argued any want of respect.

I must take this opportunity to thank you, my dear sir, for your considerate and well timed card establishing that I had no connection with your work reviewed under my editorship. Our amiable but eccentric friend Mr. G— in his love of mystifications and managing literary matters all his own way, seems to have acted some very foolish part in mixing me up with this book. I told him last spring to make my thanks to you when declining some

¹⁸⁶ *Life and letters of Bayard Taylor*, ed. by Marie Hansen-Taylor and Horace E. Scudder, 1884, Vol. I, p. 104.

offers previously made me in your name, but he seems never to have done so. And a few weeks since upon a plea that a draft would be more readily paid into this office than to a stranger he insisted upon my negotiating one for \$50.00 due to one of your contributors. Upon G's representations and at the urgent instance of a young gentleman well known to me, whose estimable family I knew needed the money immediately, I complied with the request, and this must further have confirmed your impression of my connection with the work. Poor G—is now much depressed, and I have said nothing to him on the subject, nor do I mean to say anything. I have already scolded him so severely for placing me in a false position, as I thought by some incidents of the late newspaper controversy, that he comes no more near me of late. I have told him repeatedly, my dear sir, that I wished to know when you were in town in order to renew an acquaintance which you have most probably forgotten, formed by an introduction to you twenty years ago by one of the most eminent gentleman of Philadelphia of your own persuasion. I hope now you will not visit New York again without favoring me with a call. May I venture to make one suggestion about your book? It is this. You should have put—or should yet put the name of some such person as “Wm. A. Duer, LL.D., late president of Col. Col.” on your title page as *editor*. This would at once stamp it as a work of authenticity and character and leave the talents of the contributors to tell for themselves. It would put the work at once on the same platform as Spark's Biography. As it now stands, it must fight its way as a publishers adventure and expose every contributor in turn whose name leaks out, to personal animosity. Will you pardon the liberty I take in venturing this suggestion, and believe me, my dear sir.

With much respect,

Very truly yours

C. F. HOFFMAN.¹⁸⁷

Abraham Hart, Esq.

¹⁸⁷. Manuscript in the Pennsylvania Historical Society.

96. HOFFMAN TO ABRAHAM HART, Nov. 17, 1847.

Office Literary World

Wednesday [Nov. 17, 1847]¹⁸⁸

Dear Sir:

I enclose for your private satisfaction the paragraph mentioned in my letter of last evening. By the way I hope you did not construe my somewhat free suggestion about an "authentic" editor to your late work or any other of an historical series from different pens, which you may contemplate, as meaning at all to reflect upon the industry, the zeal, or varied capability of Mr. G. whose talents I sincerely respect and for whom I have every feeling of kindness, and whose peculiarities deserve to be humored by every lover of a genuine "bibliopole" whose best wish seems to be to advance the interests of literature in all its departments. His collegiate connections and identification with historical matters through the New Jersey Historical Society have induced me to name Dr. Duer, who I understand is one of the largest contributors to your late publication. The hint however is I suppose now valueless; it being too late to adopt it unless in an enlarged edition of the work to whose revision Dr. Duer would perhaps after all not consent to give his attention and his name.

Respectfully yours,

C. F. HOFFMAN

Abraham Hart, Esq.

97. HOFFMAN TO COLONEL WEBB, Oct. 29, 1846, 1847, or 1848.

Murray Street,

New York, October 29.

My dear Colonel:

I ought long since to have acknowledged the very handsome compliment you paid me in the dedication, but I hope it is not yet

¹⁸⁸. This undated letter to Abraham Hart was evidently written the day after the letter just given. The manuscript is in the Library of Yale University.

too late to mark my sincere and cordial appreciation of so lively a proof of the friendly regard you have always manifested for

Faithfully yours,

CHARLES F. HOFFMAN ¹⁸⁹

Colonel Webb.

98. HOFFMAN TO E. A. DUYCKINCK, [c. 1847?].

My dear Sir:

I enclose you a copy of the rhymes that we spoke of. Print them without any name & if you stick them among the outside Miscellany they would be more likely to answer our purpose.¹⁹⁰

I suppose there is no truth in the report that our friend Mathews is engaged upon a play to be called *The First Alleghenian*—or three years in the life of Washington, Act 1st, 1754. The Allegheny Surveyor; Act. 2, 1763, The Allegheny Provincial Officer; Act 3, The Alleghenian General.¹⁹¹ Did these dramatic unities in his career ever strike you before?

Truly yours

C. F. HOFFMAN ¹⁹²

189. Manuscript in the Library of Brown University. Webb is no doubt James Watson Webb, owner of the *New York Courier and Enquirer*. Since the letter is dated from Murray Street, it falls between the years 1846-48, when Hoffman was living there. Because of Hoffman's "knowledge and love of woodcraft, . . . and ability to appreciate a correct picture of the North American Indian" Webb, who edited *Altowan; or, Incidents of Life and Adventure in the Rocky Mountains*, by An Amateur Traveler (Sir Wm. Drummond Stewart), in two volumes, 1846, dedicated the book to Hoffman (pp. iii-xxix). *Legends of a Log Cabin*, 1835, by "a Western Man" (C. R. Gilman) was also dedicated to Hoffman.

190. This doubtless refers to the section of *The Literary World* entitled "Miscellany." It frequently contains poems both signed and unsigned.

191. This must have been a mere rumor, for no such play materialized. The friend referred to is probably Cornelius Mathews, author of "The Journalist," "The Citizen," "The Reformer," and other short poems.

192. Manuscript in New York Public Library. The letter is undated but the outside "miscellany" probably refers to that department of *The Literary World*. Duyckinck had assumed the editorship of that paper.

99. HOFFMAN TO E. A. DUYCKINCK, [c. 1847?].

Hoffman introduces Francis Parkman as a possible contributor to *The Literary World*. The date of the letter is determined by the fact that Hoffman had not yet become editor of the *World*. See pp. 108-109 above.

100. HOFFMAN TO MR. MAPLESON [1848 or 1849?].

Office Literary World.

Monday

Dear Sir:

Just after you left my door, Mr. Griswold entered full of your book about which he had been *talking with you* at Wiley and Putnam's the last hour; He seemed much annoyed when I convinced him that he had made a mistake and told him it would give me great pleasure to make him sure of your identity by giving him a line of introduction. His great experience about publishing methods, with his disinterestedness of character in everything relating to letters, make him the man of all others whose counsel can be of the greatest service to you in those future publishing plans about which you spoke this morning.

Very truly yours,

C. F. HOFFMAN.¹⁹³Mr. Mapleson¹⁹⁴

Del Monicos.

101. JOHN ANTHON TO CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN,
May 30, 1848.

Dear Sir:

Tuesday Mg. 30 May 1848

You will receive with this note a copy of Bellinghausens . . .
[MS. illegible] Dramatic Poem "The Son of the Wilderness."¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³. Manuscript in Brown University Library. Since the letter was written from the office of *The Literary World*, it probably belongs to 1848 or 1849.

¹⁹⁴. This is probably T. W. G. Mapleson, whose *Handbook of Heraldry* was published in New York in 1851.

¹⁹⁵. Search does not reveal this poem in *The Literary World*.

The translation *from the German* is by one of my sons who has spent many years abroad and returns to us this spring. It seems to me quite worthy of the original. I recommend it to your kind notice.

Yours very truly

JNO. ANTHON¹⁹⁶

C. F. Hoffman
Ed. Lit. World.

102. EDGAR ALLAN POE TO HOFFMAN, Sept. 20, 1848.

Dear Sir,—

In your paper of July 29,¹⁹⁷ I find some comments on "Eureka," a late book of my own; and I know you too well to suppose, for a moment, that you will refuse me the privilege of a few words in reply. I feel, even, that I might safely claim, from Mr. Hoffman, the right, which every author has, of replying to his critic *tone for tone*—this is to say, of answering your correspondent, flippancy by flippancy and sneer by sneer—but in the first place, I do not wish to disgrace the *World*; and, in the second, I feel that I never should be done sneering, in the present instance, were I once to begin. Lamartine blames Voltaire for the use which he made of (*ruse*) misrepresentation, in his attacks on the priesthood; but our young students of Theology do not seem to be aware that in defense, or what they fancy to be defense, of Christianity, there is anything wrong in such gentlemanly peccadillos as the deliberate perversion of an author's text—to say nothing of the minor *indecora* of reviewing a book without reading it and without having the faintest suspicion of what it is about.

¹⁹⁶ John Anthon was a noted New York jurist; he was one of the founders of the New York law institute, and was influential in the establishment of the supreme court in New York state. This letter is in the Boston Public Library. He was a brother of Charles Anthon LL.D., Professor of Greek and Latin at Columbia College and author of a series of classical publications.

¹⁹⁷ *The Literary World*, Vol. III, p. 502 (July 29, 1848).

You will understand that it is merely the *misrepresentations* of the *critique* in question to which I claim the privilege of reply:—the mere *opinions* of the writer can be of no consequence to me—and I should imagine of very little to himself—that is to say if he knows himself, personally, so well as I have the honor of knowing him. The first misrepresentation is contained in this sentence:—“This letter is a keen burlesque on the Aristotelian or Baconian methods of ascertaining Truth, both of which the writer ridicules and despises, and pours forth his rhapsodical ecstasies in a glorification of a third mode—the noble art of *guessing*.” What I *really* say is this:—“That there is no absolute *certainly* either in the Aristotelian or Baconian process—that, for this reason, neither Philosophy is so profound as it fancies itself—and that neither has a right to sneer at that *seemingly* imaginative process called Intuition (by which the great Kepler attained his laws);¹⁹⁸ since ‘Intuition’ after all, is but the conviction arising from those *inductions* or *deductions* of which the processes are so shadowy as to escape our consciousness, elude our reason or defy our capacity of expression.” The second misrepresentation runs thus:—“The development of electricity and the formation of stars and suns, luminous and non-luminous, moons and planets, with their rings &c., is deduced, very much according to the nebular theory of Laplace, from the principle propounded above.” Now the impression intended to be made here upon the reader’s mind, by the “Student of Theology,” is, evidently, that my theory may all be very well in its way, but that it is nothing but Laplace over again, with some modifications that he (the Student of Theology) cannot regard as at all important. I have only to say that no gentleman can accuse me of the disingenuousness here implied; inasmuch as, having proceeded with my theory up to that point at which Laplace’s theory *meets it*, I then *give Laplace’s theory in full*,

198. Johann Kepler (1571-1630) was a German astronomer and author of numerous works on astronomy.

with the expression of my firm conviction of its absolute truth *at all points*. The *ground* covered by the great French astronomer compares with that covered by my theory, as a bubble compares with the ocean on which it floats; nor has he the slightest allusion to "the principle propounded above," the principle of Unity being the source of all things—the principle of Gravity being merely the Reaction of the Divine Act which irradiated all things from Unity. In fact, *no* point of *my* theory has been even so much as alluded to by Laplace. I have not considered it necessary, here, to speak of the astronomical knowledge displayed in the "stars and suns" of the Student of Theology, nor to hint that it would be better grammar to say that "development and formation" *are*, than that development and formation *is*. The third misrepresentation lies in a footnote, where the critic says:—"Further than this, Mr. Poe's claim that he can account for the existence of all organized beings—man included—merely from those principles on which the origin and present appearance of suns and worlds are explained, must be set down as mere bald assertion, without a particle of evidence. In other words, we should term it *arrant fudge*." The perversion at this point is involved in a willful misapplication of the word "principles." I say "wilful" because, at page 63, I am *particularly* careful to distinguish between the principles proper, Attraction and Repulsion, and those merely resultant *sub*-principles which control the universe in detail. To these sub-principles, swayed by the immediate spiritual influence of Deity, I leave, without examination, *all that* which the Student of Theology so roundly asserts I account for on the *principles* which account for the constitution of suns &c.

In the third column of his "review" the critic says:—"He asserts that each soul is its own God—its own Creator." What I *do* assert is, that "each soul is, *in part*, its own God—its own Creator." Just below, the critic says:—"After all these contradictory propoundings concerning God we would remind him of what he

lays down on page 28—"of this Godhead in itself he alone is not imbecile—he alone is not impious who propounds *nothing*. A man who thus conclusively convicts himself of imbecility and impiety needs no further refutation.'" Now the sentence, *as I wrote it*, and *as I find it* printed on that very page which the critic refers to and which *must have been lying before him* while he quoted my words, runs thus:—"Of this Godhead, *in itself*, he alone is not imbecile, &c., who propounds nothing." By the italics, as the critic well knew, I design to distinguish between the two possibilities—that of a knowledge of God through his works and that of a knowledge of Him in his *essential nature*. The Godhead, *in itself*, is distinguished from the Godhead observed *in its effects*. But our critic is zealous. Moreover, being a divine, he is honest—in-genuous. It is his *duty* to pervert my meaning by omitting my italics just as, in the sentence previously quoted, it was his Christian duty to falsify my argument by leaving out the two words, "in part," upon which turns the whole force—indeed the whole intelligibility of my proposition.

Were these "misrepresentations" (*is that the name for them?*) made for any less serious a purpose than that of branding my book as "impious," and myself as a "pantheist," a "polytheist," a Pagan, or a God knows what (and indeed I care very little so it be not a "Student of Theology"), I would have permitted their dishonesty to pass unnoticed, through pure contempt for the boyishness—for the *turn-down-shirt-collarness* of their tone:—but, as it is, you will pardon me, Mr. Editor, that I have been compelled to expose a "critic," who, courageously preserving his own *anonymosity*, takes advantage of my absence from the city to misrepresent, and thus vilify me, *by name*.

EDGAR A. POE.¹⁹⁹

Fordham, September 20, 1848.

199. This letter was printed in its entirety in *The International Miscellany of Literature, Art, and Science*, Vol. I, pp. 336-37 (October, 1850). It was located by Dr. T. O. Mabbott.

103. HOFFMAN TO RUFUS W. GRISWOLD, Dec. 30, 1848.

Dear Griswold,

Phila Dec 30. '48

Before leaving town I intended to have spoken to you about Mr. Magdrum whom Mr. Wallace mentioned to you that morning when we were walking together as an assistant in your Lexicon Labors, and as I may still remain here for some days I thought I would drop you this hasty line—If you do not know M. you should by all means. His mind is an arsenal of literary information and personal anecdotes of distinguished men of all kinds. He is moreover an accomplished linguist. I advise you therefore if you are seeking assistance in your work to see him and talk with him by all means, and then you can judge for yourself about an arrangement.

I find that the air of Philadelphia agrees with me—though I am still invalidish—from the influenza (that mimiack of all other maladies) or the Erysipelus or some other d—n thing or other striking inwardly and disturbing my circulation—which is still as irregular as that of California gold, affecting my nerves accordingly. At one hour I sleep as lethargically as if sitting upon one of your sermons—and at the next am as excited as you are at discovering a new author—Meek at one moment as some of the verses you have collected to cheer from any source, and ready to cram the words down people's throats the next when they tell me as you did that I am "hypocondriac"—In truth I only feel perfectly well when I am perspiring, which I take it is the new form of poetic utterance—the things of the heart coming out through the skin—for the mischief in the circulation lies first in the heart—although half the time I have a whole opera singing in my ear. Apropos to ears [*Ass-es?*] for today

truly yours H.

P.S. If you see Mrs. Oaksmith give my best regards to her—I hear her book spoken well of everywhere²⁰⁰—Her star is in the

²⁰⁰. This is probably Mrs. Oakes Smith's *Stories for Children*, which appeared in 1847.

ascendency and long may it shine and brightly and it will—I told Godey yesterday of its going so rapidly to as second edition &c²⁰¹

104. HOFFMAN TO JULIA HOFFMAN [?], June 23, 1849.²⁰²

201. MS. in the Boston Public Library.

202. See p. 188 above, for the whole of this letter.

APPENDIX B

UNCOLLECTED POEMS

In 1873 Charles Fenno Hoffman's nephew, Edward Fenno Hoffman of Philadelphia, published in one volume a large number of his uncle's poems which had not previously been collected.¹ Bryant wrote Mr. Hoffman at that time a letter which was included in the preface and which was a very handsome tribute to his uncle.

This collection of poems was extensive, but there are naturally some pieces which have since been discovered or which have been found in a form differing somewhat from the presentation in the collection of 1873.² The poems which follow did not appear in the 1873 edition or in any earlier collection of Hoffman's poems, but were printed in various newspapers and magazines between the years 1825 and 1850. They are here arranged in chronological order.

TO —

They tell me that my trusting heart
Thy fondness is deceived in,
They say that thou as fickle art
As others I've believed in;
I heed not, reckon not, what they say
So earnestly about thee,

1. *The Poems of Charles Fenno Hoffman, Collected and Edited by his Nephew, Edward Fenno Hoffman*, Philadelphia, Porter & Coates, 1873.

2. On the publication of this collection, there appeared a very favorable notice in *The Saturday Review* (London), of April 25, 1874.

I'd rather trust my soul away,
Than for a moment doubt thee.

I do not in thy presence yet
A former passion smother,
Nor in thy tenderness forget
The coldness of another.
Oh; no, my heart is thine alone,
And memory, can never
Recall a dream forever flown,
My thoughts from thee to sever.

Like mine, thy fondest hopes were crost,
Thy best affections slighted,
Thy peace in Passion's tempest lost,
Thy dearest prospects blighted;
Devotion is most deep and pure
In hearts by sorrow shaded,
And love like ours will still endure,
When brighter ties have faded.³

And Dearest, had we sooner met,
Ere both were broken hearted;
Or could we even now forget
The ties which Fate has parted——
Our souls would never be so true,
So tenderly united,
Nor should we feel as now we do——
The bliss of love requited.

CASPAR ⁴

3. This and the four following poems, which were written for *Signs of the Times*, Albany, edited by Hoffman's friend John B. Van Schaick, were all signed "Caspar." This signature is identified as Hoffman's through a letter which Hoffman wrote to Van Schaick in which he thanked him for so charitably admitting the Caspar rhymes into the *Signs of the Times*. (See letter on p. 199 above.)

4. *Signs of the Times*, August 2, 1828.

TO ———

Thy cheek is pale! Has feeling there
 One moment marked the hue of care?
 Can care itself in secret prey
 And steal thy youthful bloom away?
 Oh no! that mien can never hide
 Suppressed emotion's swelling tide——
 'Tis far too cold, too calm to cover
 A generous suffering for another——
 And though consuming care could not,
 To revel, choose a lovelier spot,
 In features more divine——
 I will not think his wasting blight
 Thus early, can remorseless light
 On such a heart as thine——
 Thy gentle bosom ne'er could know,
 The havoc made by stormy woe;
 In sterner hearts alone appears
 In lapse of hours, the wreck of years;
 And only such can still endure
 The wounds which Death alone can cure——
 The paleness then upon thy cheek
 Does not the silent waste bespeak
 Of Health or Hope within,
 But thought has left a transient place,
 A lighter mood will soon efface——
 A cloud that will a moment stay,
 Then pass like woman's love away,
 As if it ne'er had been.

CASPAR ⁵

5. *Ibid.*, August 23, 1828.

ON THE GRAVE OF A FRIEND

Why pause to gaze upon this spot?
Seek'st thou in idle mood the name
Of him whose form is laid to rot
Beneath this turfen frame?

Or does the weed which rankly waves
Above this mound attract thine eye?
It blooms as fresh o'er other graves,
Why not to them pass by?

If thou art one whose morbid mind,
O'er scenes like this delights to brood,
To waste thy grief upon the wind,
On all thy tearful mood.

The mouldering form that slumbers here,
If conscious of thy lavished sighs,
Would hardly prize the random tear,
That falls from Strangers eyes.

The pulse of life that here was stilled,
With human passion ne'er beat high;
No restless dreams this bosom filled,
With vain ambitious sigh.

The heart that here at last was hushed,
With faithful Friendship throb'd alone;
It ne'er with shame his features flushed——
Perchance unlike thine own.

A dog——nay, check that scornful smile,
A Dog's remains are buried here——
The only friend whom wordly guile,
Or rivalry, or woman's wile,
Cannot make less sincere.

CASPAR ⁶

SONG

Air: "Though I leave you now in sorrow"

Farewell! we part, we part forever;
 'Twere better had we never met,
 But still the dream that's past, I never,
 Never can on earth forget.

Like flowers that spring on rocks to perish,
 Has been each hope I ever nurst
 The one my heart would fondest cherish;
 Was always sure to fade the first.
 Yet love around that heart will twine,
 Corroding as it is away,
 As closer clings the ivy vine,
 Whene'er its leaves enwrap decay.

The lingering sun is forced to vanish,
 At night's approach beyond the West;
 But sorrow's night can never banish,
 Thine image from my brain or breast,
 As waves will in the moonbeams shine,
 While all is dark and cold beneath,
 Each look I've loved and lost of thine,
 Will beam o'er memory's tide till death.

Farewell! we part, we part forever,
 'Twere better we had never met;
 Yet still the dream that's past, I never,
 Never can on earth forget.

CASPAR ⁷

7. *Ibid.*, September 20, 1828.

STANZAS

It is not Friendship that would here record
The hacknied tribute of elegiac wo—
The sacred tear, by mute affection poured,
The silent offerings that in secret flow,
Are, in the realms to which thy soul has soared,
As grateful still as once they were below.
'Tis not that vanity thy modest name
Would wreathe with chaplets, which it never earned—
And empty honors idly strive to claim
For one whose mind their fleeting shadows spurned.

It is the man—'tis *character*, that here
Exacts the tribute unto merit due—
'Tis singleness of heart—piety sincere,
A soul unto itself, as others, true.
'Tis while we ripen'd intellect revere,
To human excellence we in homage sue.
And one to cold obscurity consign'd,
From which in dreams alone he e'er has sighed,
Would snatch the memory of thy noble mind,
From dark Oblivion's swift effacing tide.

Few of the qualities, to few belong,
Which here were all within one breast combined—
The gentle temper, and the judgment strong—
The chastened humor, and the taste refined—
The indignation, when audacious wrong
Excited feeling deep, as well as kind.
Such minds can ne'er that impious cant approve,
Which names this life one miserable breath,
Measures the Creator's, by a mortal's love,
And makes Religion odious as Death.

Not as the vulture, but the peaceful dove,
 The soul to solace, not the mind molest—
 She comes, embassadress of heavenly love,
 To the wild empire of the human breast:
 And bears a mission from the realms above,
 To soothe its jarring elements to rest.
 And thou hast realized her promise, when
 The bitter struggles of this world are o'er,
 Nor cold suspense nor torturing despair,
 With doubt or fear distract thy bosom more.⁸

FROM "DIARY OF A YOUNG MAN ABOUT TOWN"

The night-breeze that at random sweeps,
 Across some long neglected lute,
 May chance to wake one lonely chord,
 While every string beside is mute.

And tones that oft unheeded fall
 On those whom they were meant to bless,
 May from some faithful bosom call
 One mournful thrill of tenderness.⁹

8. These "Stanzas" were prompted by an obituary notice of Mr. Philip Rhinelanders "appearing in *The New-York Evening Post*, February 29, 1830." Mr. Rhinelanders, who had married Hoffman's aunt, Mary Colden Hoffman, was here described as "conspicuous for the strictest integrity, for the undeviating amiableness of his disposition, and for the constant attention to, and respect for, the opinions and feelings of all around him." This poem in the *American* (March 4, 1830) is signed by the initial "H". The obituary notice appears in *The New-York Evening Post* of March 1, 1830, p. 2, col. 4, instead of February 29, as the notice in the *American* states.

9. *New-York American*, June 19, 1830, p. 2, col. 3. In addition to his own regular articles and reviews, Hoffman published under the heading of contributions many of his own poems. One important contribution, supposedly from a correspondent, was the "Diary of a Young Man About Town" which appeared irregularly. This was Hoffman's own work and the first letter (*New-York American*, April 30, 1830) introducing the contributor is signed "C" as Hoffman indicated he would do

FROM "DIARY OF A YOUNG MAN ABOUT TOWN"

Farewell! that parting word at least
 I still may speak unchecked by thee,
 Though even cold regard has ceased,
 Love's latest task is left to me—
 And long my lips would lingering dwell
 Upon that word—Farewell! Farewell!

Farewell? that word I may not speak—
 The thought it breathes is not for me.
 Farewell? it now were worse than weak
 To whisper it alone to thee,—
 But could I as I'd speak be heard,
 I'd pour my soul in that one word.
 Farewell!¹⁰

EXTEMP. TO A LADY

This heart of mine—this heart of mine—
 Both you and I have schooled it well
 In coldness—but those eyes of thine,
 When near it they one moment dwell,
 Prove that in that moment yet
 It will the task of years forget.

Those eyes of thine—those eyes of thine—
 Both you and I have known full well
 Their power—but this heart of mine
 On their deluding light will dwell
 As eagerly as fondly yet
 As if the past we could forget.

in a letter to his brother. In addition to this, certain poems, notably "Sparkling and Bright" and "The Blighted Heart," known to be Hoffman's, appear among these contributions. The *Diary* is mostly written in prose with a brief poem appearing occasionally.

10. *New-York American*, June 26, 1830, p. 2, col. 3.

This heart of mine—this heart of mine—
 Oh! could they once but read it well
 Those eyes of thine—those eyes of thine—
 Upon a withered scroll would dwell,
 Where deeply written lingers yet
 Devotion it cannot forget.

C.¹¹

Sunday night.

HEARTS.—*Impromptu to a Lady*

Yes! it were well,—unless she meant us
 To make so much ado about them,—
 If Nature in this world had sent us
 One and all alike without them.

For now they here so strangely fall
 One knows not how or where to choose them,
To some they seem not given at all,
To others only lent to lose them.

H.¹²

SLEIGHING SONG

By Hans Van Poeng

Merrily, merrily sound the bells
 As o'er the ground we roll;
 And the snow-drift breaks in silver flakes
 Before our Cariole;
 While, muffled in sables rich and warm,
 With mantle and beaver dight,

11. This poem, which appeared in the *New-York American* for October 4, 1830, was written "FOR THE NEW YORK AMERICAN." It is signed with the initial "C," which is undoubtedly for "Charles," as Hoffman had explained to his brother in a letter (page 204 above) that his long articles would be signed "H" and his communications by one of his other initials.

12. *New-York American*, December 16, 1830, p. 2, col. 5.

We drive in the teeth of the angry storm,
 Or skim in the cold moonlight,
 Merrily, merrily, &c.

Merrily, merrily sound the bells
 Upon the wind without,
 When the wine is mulled, and the waffle culled,
 And the joke is pass'd about;
 And rosy lips and dimpled cheeks
 The flash of wit inspire,
 While mirth in many a bright eye speaks,
 Around the crackling fire.
 Merrily, merrily, &c.¹³

A SYBILLINE LEAF

Thou askest thy Fate? No Astrologer I,
 To read what they tell us is writ in the sky—
 Yet thy Fortune sweet Ella I know I can trace
 While the lore of the heavens I read in thy face.

"Bright—bright as the splendor of tropical skies,
 "Or the soul that beams out from those love-lighting eyes,
 "Will sparkle the stream of thy life's happy hours,
 "Like a brook which sings through one long summer of flowers."

This, this I know,
 But still there's something darkly hid,
 At times beneath that pensive lid,
 That says 'twill not be so,

13. In the *New-York American* for January 17, 1831, Hoffman concludes a half-column discussion of the snowstorm and the sporting opportunities it offers by asking to be "forgiven for concluding our remarks upon this moving subject, with the following feeble translation of a spirited Dutch song, by an early and forgotten poet of this province." The article is signed with an asterisk. Hoffman is again using his "favorite ruse" of pretending that a poem is a translation.

Yet, lovely girl, do not revere,
 As truth, these idle bodings here.
 "Rashly, rashly, wilt thou give
 "That young heart away,
 "Sadly, sadly, wilt thou live,
 Through each weary day,
 "Watching wilted hopes to bloom,
 "That never will,
 "Disbelieving half thy cruel doom,
 Still, oh still.
 Thou wilt love as woman loves,
 "Fondly and true.
 "Blindly as woman trusts,
 "Wilt thou trust too.
 "Thou wilt be loved as men love
 "Lightly alone—
 Thy joys be shared by others,
 "Thy griefs be all thine own."

H.¹⁴

Tuesday night

THE BOUQUET

They were warmed to life in a hot-house's walls—
 They were nursed to bloom in its stagnant air—
 And, like love that is fostered in gilded halls,
 Not born with the blasts of the world to bear.

 But wend with me—to the deep woods wend—
 Where far in the forest the wild flow'rs keep;
 Where their bossy cups o'er the streamlet pend,
 And their tender buds through the piled leaves peep.*

14. *New-York American*, October 31, 1832, p. 3, col. 1.

* "The yellow violet's modest bell

"Peeps through the last year's leaves below."—BRYANT.

[This is Hoffman's note. The lines quoted are found in Bryant's poem,
 "The Yellow Violet."]

Thou shalt gather from those of the oriole's hue,
Whose flaming wings o'er our pathway flit,
From the saffron orchis, or lupin blue,
Or those like the foam on my courser's bit.

One steed, and one saddle, us both shall bear,
One hand of each on the bridle meet;
And beneath the wrist that entwines me there,
An answering pulse from heart shall beat.

I will sing thee many a joyous lay,
As we chase the deer on the mountain side;
While the winds that over the prairie play,
Shall fan the cheek of my woodland bride.

Our home shall be by the cool bright streams,
Where beaver chooses his safe retreat;
And our hearth shall smile like the sun's warm gleams
Through the branches around our lodge that meet.

Then wend with me—to the deep woods wend—
Where far in the forest the wild flowers keep;
Where their bossy cups o'er the streamlet pend,
And their tender buds through the piled leaves peep.

H.¹⁵

RESEMBLANCES

Her heart is like a harp whose strings
At will are touched alike by all,
Her heart is like a bird that sings
In answer to each fowler's call
That harp has still one secret tone¹⁶

15. *New-York American*, April 3, 1833, p. 2, col. 5.

16. In *Love's Calendar* this line reads: "That harp;—has it one secret tone."

Reserved for master hands alone—
That bird has still one meaning note¹⁷
Which only toward its mate will float.

Her heart is like a gallant bark
Whose hold with precious freight is stowed
While on the deck you only mark
Traces of a less costly load.
That bark her course will sometimes veer
As if no hand were there to steer,
But yet the pilot does not sleep
That guides that vessel o'er the deep.

Blest will he be whose listening ear,
Thrilling to sounds that none have heard,
Shall in their finest cadence hear
The music of that harp and bird.
But lady more will envy him
For whom that freighted ship may swim—
Who, by the light of those bright eyes,
Shall steer to port his noble prize.

H.¹⁸

[WHO, MAIDEN?]

Who, Maiden, makes this river flow?
The Spirit—he makes its ripples glow—
But I have a charm that can make thee, dear,
Steal over the wave to thy lover here.

17. In *Love's Calendar* this line reads: "That bird;—has it one soulful note."

18. *New-York American*, April 6, 1833, p. 2, col. 6. Hoffman uses a variation of the first stanza of this poem for the first stanza of the poem for the fifth day in "Love's Calendar" (1873 edition, p. 116). The last two stanzas he does not use again.

Who, Maiden, makes this river flow?
 The Spirit—he makes its ripples glow—
 Yet every blush, that my love would hide,
 Is mirror'd for me in the tell-tale tide.

And though thou should'st sleep on the farthest isle,
 Round which these dimpling waters smile—
 Yet I have a charm that can make thee, dear,
 Steal over the wave to thy lover here.¹⁹

WHAT IS SOLITUDE?²⁰

Not in the shadowy wood,
 Not in the rock-ribbed glen,²¹
 Not where the sleeping echoes brood²²
 In caves untrod by men;
 Not by the sea-swept shore²³
 Where loitering surges break,²⁴
 Not on the mountain hoar,
 Not by the breezeless lake,
 Not on the desert plain
 Where man hath never stood,
 Whether on isle or main—
 Not there is Solitude!

19. This translation of an Indian love song is given in the article on "Nights in an Indian Lodge," in *The American Monthly Magazine*, April, 1835, Vol. V, pp. 147-48. It appears also as "Medicine Song of an Indian Lover" in Chapter VI of *Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie*, Vol. I, p. 207.

20. There is a poem "What is Solitude" in Edward Fenno Hoffman's 1873 edition of Hoffman's poems, pp. 24-26, but the variations of the following earlier edition make it exceedingly interesting, especially the variations of the last two stanzas. The version in E. F. Hoffman's edition comes from *The Echo*, 1844, p. 33, while this appeared in *The American Monthly Magazine* in June, 1835 (Vol. V, p. 256). The variant lines in the footnotes are from the 1844 and 1873 editions, which are identical.

21. Not in the crag-hung glen,

22. Not where the echoes brood

23. Not by the black seashore,

24. Where barren surges break,

There are birds in the woodland bowers,²⁵
 Voices in lonely dells,
 And streams that talk to the listening hours²⁶
 In earth's most secret cells.²⁷
 There is life on the foam-flecked sand²⁸
 By the ocean's curling lip,²⁹
 And life on the still lake's strand³⁰
 Mid the flowers that o'er it dip;³¹
 There is life in the rocking pines,³²
 That sigh on the mountain's crest,³³
 And life in the courser's mane that shines³⁴
 As he scours the desert's breast.³⁵

But go to the crowded mart,³⁶
 Mid the busy haunts of men,

25. Birds are in woodland bowers;

26. Streams to the listening hours

27. Talk in earth's secret cells;

28. Over the gray-ribbed sand

29. Breathe Ocean's frothy lips;

30. Over the still lake's strand

31. The wild flower toward it dips;

32. Pluming the mountain's crest

33. Life tosses in its pines,

34. Coursing the desert's breast

35. Life in the steed's mane shines.

36. The last stanza offers so many variations that it must be studied in its entirety to secure a full comparison:

Leave—if thou wouldst be lonely—

Leave Nature for the crowd;

Seek there for one—one only

With kindred mind endowed!

There—as with Nature erst

Closely thou wouldst commune—

The deep soul-music nursed

In either heart, attune!

Heart-wearied thou wilt own,

Vainly that phantom wooed,

That thou at last hast known

What is true Solitude!

Go there and ask thy heart,
 What answer makes it then?
 Ay! go where Wealth is flinging
 Her golden lures around,
 Where the trump of Fame is ringing,
 Where Pleasure's wiles abound;
 Go—if thou would'st be lonely—
 Where the phantom Love is wooed,
 And own that there—there only—
 Mid crowds is Solitude.

C. F. H.

DESTINY

From the Agamemnon of Aeschylus ³⁷

There is a saying of the olden day—
 That human BLISS, when too divinely great,
 Dies not in barrenness—but still survives
 In her dissimilar offspring—darkest wo—
 Born to the happiest, from their ancient joy!—
 But I, alone, do hold a better creed—
 That CRIME, revived, doth still send forth,
 To far posterity, the cursed seed
 Of sin, the self-avenger—while the fate
 Of innocent houses, to the latest time
 Of Innocence is parent, and of Peace.

H.³⁸

37. In this and the two following poems, we have moderately close translations of three celebrated passages corresponding to lines 727-36, 859-74, and 747-54 in Plumptre's version. (Letter to J. B. Van Schaick p. 195 above.) The first poem, the only one designating authorship, is signed by the initial "H." All three appear in *The American Monthly Magazine*, which Hoffman was editing. Hoffman may be making his own version from another translation.

38. From *The American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. V, N. S., p. 406 (July, 1835).

CLYTEMNESTRA'S GREETING

From the Agamemnon

Quenched were the secret fountains of my soul,
Whence flowed the ceaseless stream-exhaust of tears,
The sources of my sorrow had run dry!
Long widow-watchings on my lonely bed
Wore out my weary eyes!—At eventide
By the neglected lamps, I sat alone
In silence and in gloom.—At dead of night,
Erect I sprang from agonizing dreams,
If but the buzzing night-fly's silly strain

Fell on the porch of my distracted ear!
Now—when this anguish is o'erpast—I hail,
I hail my husband—as the guardian dog,
Defender of the fold—the anchored rope
That saves the ship—the massy pillar old
That props the roof-tree of some lordly hall—
The sole-begotten of an aged sire—
The cry of land to storm-tossed seaman's heart—
A glorious morrow beaming from a night
Of storm and darkness—yea! a living well,
Greeting the wanderer's lip at pitch of noon.³⁹

JUSTICE

From the Agamemnon of Aeschylus

The eye of Justice—bright immortal ray—
Doth love the smoky cabins of the poor,
Home of the guiltless—honoring the life,
The scanty fare, and hard laborious days,
Of whom no honorers hath, save Hope and Her.

39. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, N. S., p. 472 (August, 1835).

But from the blissful mansions of the proud,
 The vaunted gauds, o'ergilt, but stained beneath,
 And black from contact with corrupted hands,
 With head averse, she flies—in shuddering hate
 Of boundless riches, falsely stamped with praise.⁴⁰

THE WATCHERS

'Tis midnight, and the Watchers are on high—
 The living Watchers from the throne of grace—
 Starring the dark and lustrous canopy
 With drops of diamond glory!—Who can gaze
 Upon their wild and melancholy light,
 Nor deem them sent—not the mere lamps of night—
 As lanthorns to his soul, to guide his steps aright?
H.⁴¹

[OH CHERISH THEM ALL]

Oh cherish them all—the early ties
 That first in youth were wove,
 For life, it never in after-time
 Can knit such links of love.
 You must gather the osiers lithe and young,
 If a buckler's frame ye would strongly braid
 And the stoutest shield against mortal ill,
 From the hearts that are twined in youth is made.

Oh cherish them all—the flowers of love
 That in life's spring put forth,
 For age it never, with all its fruits,
 Can match them in their worth.
 And oh, when over the flood of years

40. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, N. S., p. 447 (August, 1835).

41. *Ibid.*, Vol. V, N. S., p. 474 (August, 1835). The initial "H" identifies it as Hoffman's.

The soul amid drowned joys would roam,
The first best branch on her questing track
Is that which grew in the bower of home.⁴²

EARLY LAYS

By C. F. Hoffman

III.

I lied in what I writ upon this page,
Saying that *more* than now I could not love thee!
Others, like me, may, at thy budding age,
Hold every feeling in sweet vasalage
Unto thy charms. But I—by all above me!—
Will prove thee Suz'raine of my soul more nearly;
When Time his arts shall 'gainst thy beauty wage,
To break their serfdom—serving thee more dearly.

Mark how the Sunset, with its parting hues,
The heaving bosom of yon river staineth!
To yield those tincts the grieving waves refuse.
Nor yet that purpling light at last will lose
Till Night itself, like Death, above them reigneth!
So *more* and *more* will brighten till the last,
The light, which once upon my true soul cast,
Reflected there, still true till death remaineth.⁴³

42. *The American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. III, N. S., p. 110 (February, 1837). When Vanderlyn after a quarrel with his father decides to leave home, he goes to pay a last visit to his sweetheart and finds her singing to a favorite air this song, the words of which he himself "had supplied in more careless hours."

43. *The New-Yorker*, Vol. IX, p. 20 (March 21, 1840). No. I of this group of four poems appears in the E. F. Hoffman 1873 edition on p. 176; No. II on pp. 118-19; No. IV on p. 124. No. III, copied above, does not appear in this edition of Hoffman's poems.

ENIGMA

By Charles Fenno Hoffman

It must tremble on earth! for it dies off in air,
And ocean forbids it to have a place there;
Yet it haunts the rough shores of a storm-harass'd lake,
And where sea-surfs are foaming, its image will break,
While the quietest dew-drop on bowery spray
Will perish at once if you steal it away.

The lawn and the meadow its presence may spare,
But no shrub can e'er sprout save it ministers there!
In the odor of blossoms it floats on the breeze,
It freshens the verdure of moss-covered trees,
And no flower can flourish in rock-shelter'd nook,
But it shares of its fragrance by forest and brook.

The knight from his pennon may blot it in vain,
With the stream of the battle it pours o'er the plain;
It climbs the rough rampart, it springs the broad arch,
And marshals the army wherever it march:
'Mid the broadside of navies it rides on each spar,
And gives life in each charge to the cheering hurrah.

It loves not the chase; yet at sound of the horn
It will rouse with the hunter at break of the morn:
It shares not the feast,—though it sits at the board,—
Yet when music is breathing it strings every chord,
And when beakers are brimming, and healths offered up,
It floats on the bumper, but dies in the cup.

It delights in the churchyard, the bier, and the grave,
Yet without it no birth, and no bridal you have,
And when orisons rise to the Father above,

It hovers around every offering of love;
For, rife in all hearts, though for aye linked with care,
It begins our repentance, and ends every prayer.⁴⁴

HEART—AUGURY
(SUGGESTED BY A BROKEN APOLLO)

By C. F. Hoffman

One moment, and the omen seemed
Too dread, too fearful to withstand,
That brow whence light and glory beamed,
Dashed to the earth by mine own hand!
Proud type of life, and light, and power,
How did it shattered lie!
Yet beautiful in that dark hour,
Gleamed up the godlike eye.

Oh, is it thus within the heart,
The voice of song must mute be lying?
Thus from its shattered cords depart
Each cadence, like the wind-harp's dying?—
Thus lowly bowed in grief to earth,
Their glory in the dust,
Must hearts forget their twin-like birth,
Forget their love and trust?

Oh never thus!—with grasp of power
A higher omen let us seize!
Command that Fate a brighter dower
Bring forth from fragments such as these;
Here, glorious in their mute decay,
Are emblems of the past,
Baseless and shadowless were they—
Too glittering to last!

44. From *The Token for 1842*, p. 292. See p. 267 above.

A type was this—what need of such,
 When life and light within are breathing?
 When *love*, by its own magic touch,
 New glories round the brow is wreathing?
 The semblance well may scattered lie,
 When Truth herself is here!
 Apollo's lute in ruin lie,
 Lost to the outer ear.

When hymning melodies divine
 Within the new-born soul are swelling,
 Immortal garlands round it twine,
 Immortal lays the chords are telling!
 While thou dost list, well pleased to hear,
 My beautiful! my true!
 I would not that another ear
 The song of rapture knew! ⁴⁵

THE SPRIG OF WINTERGREEN

By C. F. Hoffman

It grew not in the golden clime
 Where painted birds, in bowers as gay,
 Their notes on Tropic breezes chime,
 While Nature keeps her holiday!
 'Neath northern stars its leaflets first
 Expanded to the wooing air,
 And, in the lonely wild-wood nurst,
 It learn'd the northern blast to bear.

Transplanted from its simple home—
 By rocky dell or wind-swept hill—

45. This poem signed by Hoffman appears in *The Gift*, Philadelphia, 1844, p. 42. Many annuals and gift books contained each a poem or two of Hoffman's.

Like birds in stranger climes that roam,
 And keep their native wood-notes still—
 Still in its glossy verdure dressed,
 It blooms, unchanged with change of scene,
 An emblem on its wearer's breast
 Of Truth and Purity within.⁴⁶

THE FAIR STUDENT

By C. F. Hoffman

The hair, the brow, the soft, yet earnest eyes—
 Yes! although lip and cheek be fuller—rounder—
 My own loved Blanche—how doth her image rise,
 As o'er her book I often thus have found her!
 I'll call thee Blanche, sweet maiden, all unheeding,
 And deem the volume which now rests before thee
 Love's holy Missal, where an Angel reading
 Might turn the pages as he hovered o'er thee.
 "Holier than Love!", Ah! is aught more holy
 Than the pure thought which maiden heart may wear,
 When Prayer but utters Love in melancholy,
 And Love in gladness takes the voice of Prayer?⁴⁷

CRADLE SONG

Swinging, swinging, lul la by,
 Sleep, little daughter sleep,
 'Tis your mother watching by,
 Swinging, swinging she will keep,
 Little daughter lul la by.

46. John Keese and Hoffman were such good friends that Hoffman called him "Keesy" (letter on p. 225 above). No doubt Keese asked Hoffman to make a special contribution to *The Wintergreen, a Perennial Gift for 1844*, of which Keese was editor and in which this poem appeared (p. 247).

47. From *The Gift*, Philadelphia, 1844, p. 96.

'Tis your mother loves you dearest,
Sleep, sleep, daughter sleep,
Swinging, swinging, ever, nearest,
Baby, baby, do not weep;
Little daughter, lul la by.

Swinging, swinging, lul la by,
Sleep, sleep, little one,
And thy mother will be nigh—
Swing, swing, not alone—
Little daughter, lul la by.⁴⁸

CORN SONG

CEREAL CHORUS

Wagemin! wagemin!
Thief in the blade,
Blight of the cornfield
Paimosaid.

RECITATIVE

See you not traces, while pulling the leaf,
Plainly depicting the **TAKER** and thief?
See you not signs by the ring and the spot,
How the man crouched as he crept in the lot?
Is it not plain by this mark on the stalk,
That he was heavily bent in his walk?
Old man be nimble! the old should be good,
But thou art a cowardly thief of the wood.

48. From Henry R. Schoolcraft's *Oneóta, or Characteristics of the Red Race of America*, New York, 1845, p. 214.

CEREAL CHORUS

Wagemin! wagemin!
Thief in the blade,
Blight of the cornfield
Paimosaid.

RECITATIVE

Where, little TAKER of things not your own—
Where is your rattle, your drum, and your bone?
Surely a WALKER so nimble of speed,
Surely he must be a Meta ⁴⁹ indeed.
See how he stoops as he breaks off the ear,
Nushka! ⁵⁰ he seems for a moment in fear;
Walker, be nimble—oh! walker be brief,
Hooh! ⁵¹ It is plain the old man is the thief.

CEREAL CHORUS

Wagemin! wagemin!
Thief in the blade,
Blight of the cornfield
Paimosaid.

RECITATIVE

Wabuma! ⁵² corn-taker, why do you lag?
None but the stars see you—fill up your bag!
Why do you linger to gaze as you pull,
Tell me, my little man, is it most full?
A-tia! ⁵³ see, a red spot on the leaf,
Surely a warrior cannot be a thief!

49. A juggler. [This and notes 50-53 are Hoffman's.]

50. A sharp exclamation quickly to behold something striking.

51. A derogatory exclamation.

52. Behold thou!

53. A masculine exclamation, to express surprise.

Ah, little night-thief, be deer your pursuit,
And leave here no print of your dastardly foot.⁵⁴

THE MARRIAGE RING

By C. F. Hoffman

("Tell her only," said the dying husband, "to replace our ring upon her finger when I am no more."—*The Divorced*.)

Thoughts, through Infinitude bleakly roving,
Thoughts, that to both were else forbidden,
Thoughts full—oh, full, to pain—of loving,
Were in its circle shrined and hidden,
By Faith and Reason there unchidden.

It gave the right to serve—to serve
One chosen being, loved so dearly
That we must thrill in every nerve
At aught which moved her soul sincerely,
At aught which touched her welfare nearly.

The right to feel—in soul to feel
That howe'er wanting we may be
To God—to man—we still can kneel
And thank him there is *one* that we
Make happy by our ministry.

Then wear the ring when I'm no more!
Wear it, though thou shouldst love again,
'Twill teach *one truth* till life is o'er—
He *lived*, who living but in pain,
While thou wast blest lived not in vain.⁵⁵

54. *Oneôta*, 1845, pp. 255-56.

55. Perhaps the last poem from Hoffman's pen is "The Marriage Ring," which appeared in *Godey's Lady's Book*, in February, 1849 (Vol. XXXVIII, p. 104), and which was probably written just before his admission to Dr. Kirkbride's hospital on January 22. This poem appears also in *The Opal*, Philadelphia, 1849, pp. 13-14.

SONNET.—THE LAST OF THE RACE

By C. F. Hoffman

Not thus the Hebrew leader from the height
Gazed on the promised land that stretched below,
When, going up to meet the morning light,
In the far east, he saw its fresh rays glow
With glorious increase, like his People's might!
Child of the Setting Sun! from yon lone steep
Thou seest the orb, that cheered thy course thus far,
Desert thee for some unknown realm of night;
Awhile for thee—for thee no Bethlehem star
Rays out, to guide thee o'er the untried deep,
Where, now, no Blesséd Islands of Delight,
Believed in fondly, greet thine aching sight—
No spirit-voices from the waters sweep

To tell where rest thy race, and where thou too mayst sleep.⁵⁶

New York, July, 1847.

CALLING-ONE'S-OWN (OJIBWA)

Translated by Charles Fenno Hoffman

Awake! flower of the forest, sky-treading bird of the prairie.
Awake! awake! wonderful fawn-eyed One.
When you look upon me I am satisfied; as flowers that drink dew.
The breath of your mouth is the fragrance of flowers in the morn-
ing,
Your breath is their fragrance at evening in the moon-of-fading
leaf.
Do not the red streams of my veins run toward you
As forest-streams to the sun in the moon of bright nights?

⁵⁶ Hoffman draws in this poem taken from *The Odd Fellows' Offering for 1848*, edited by James L. Ridgely and Paschal Donaldson, New York, 1848, p. 236, a contrast between the Hebrew and the Indian.

When you are beside me my heart sings; a branch it is, dancing,
Dancing before the Wind-spirit in the moon of strawberries.
When you frown upon me, beloved, my heart grows dark —
A shining river, the shadows of clouds darken,
Then with your smiles comes the sun and makes to look like gold
Furrows the cold wind drew in the water's face.
Myself! behold me! blood of my beating heart.
Earth smiles—the waters smile—even the sky-of-clouds smiles—
 but I,
I lose the way of smiling when you are not near.
Awake! awake! my beloved.⁵⁷

57. This poem, which purports to be a translation of an Indian song, has been reprinted from George W. Cronyn's *The Path on the Rainbow*, (New York, 1918, pp. 12-13), where it appears as the work of Hoffman. In its simplicity and directness, this love song is in perfect consonance with the spirit of contemporary poetry, as has been pointed out by Marguerite Wilkinson in her *New Voices, An Introduction to Contemporary Poetry* (New York, 1919). Of the poem, which is reprinted in full on p. 282 of her book, Miss Wilkinson (p. 273) says: "The lines of the Ojibwa poem 'Calling-One's-Own,' are resonant with the spirit of a great poet."

APPENDIX C

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. HOFFMAN'S SEPARATE PUBLICATIONS

This bibliography of Hoffman's independent publications is arranged in chronological order. With the exception of those titles located in other libraries, copies of all the following books may be found in the New York Public Library.

I. A WINTER IN THE WEST

A Winter in the West. By a New-Yorker.

Where can I journey to your secret springs,
Eternal Nature? Onward still I press,
Follow thy windings still, yet sigh for more.

GOETHE.

In two volumes, Vol. I [Vol. II], New York: Published by Harper & Brothers, No. 82 Cliff Street, 1835.

A Winter in the Far West. By C. F. Hoffman, In two volumes, London: Richard Bentley, 1835. [Copy in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.]

A Winter in the West: Letters descriptive of Chicago and Vicinity in 1833-4. By Charles Fenno Hoffman, Author of "Wild Scenes in Forest and Prairie"; "Greyslaer"; "The Life of Jacob Leisler"; "The Vigil of Faith; and Other Poems"; "Love's Calendar"; "The Echo; or Borrowed Notes for Home Circulation"; etc., Editor of "Knickerbocker Magazine"; "American

Monthly Magazine"; and "New York Mirror," Reprint with the Original and New Notes. Fergus' Historical Series No. 20 Chicago: Fergus Printing Company, 1882. pp. 1-64. [This reprint includes only the letters descriptive of Chicago and vicinity.]

II. THE NEW-YORK BOOK OF POETRY

The New-York Book of Poetry. "*Patriae fumus igne alieno luculentior.*" New York: George Dearborn, Publisher, No. 38 Gold Street. 1837. x, 233 pp.

III. WILD SCENES IN THE FOREST AND PRAIRIE

Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie. By C. F. Hoffman, Esq., Author of "A Winter in the Far West." In two volumes. London: Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street, Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty. Price Sixteen Shillings, 1839. [Copy in the Library of the New York Historical Society.]

Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie, with sketches of American Life, by C. F. Hoffman, author of "A Winter in the West," etc. In two volumes, New York: William H. Colyer, No. 5, Hogue Street, 1843. viii, 13-207, 13-210 pp. [Copy in the New York Society Library.]

Wilde Scenen im Wald und Prairie, mit Skizzen Amerikanischen Lebens, aus dem Englischen des Amerikaners Charles Fenow Hoffmann von Fr. Gerstäcker. Erster [Zweiter] Band. Dresden und Leipzig, in der Aruddischen Buchhandlung. 1845. [Copy in the British Museum.]

IV. GREYSLAER

Greyslaer: a Romance of the Mohawk. By the Author of "A Winter in the West," and "Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie."

"There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will."

SHAKESPEARE.

In two volumes, New York, Harper & Brothers, 82 Cliff Street, 1840.

Greyslaer: a Romance of the Mohawk. By the Author of "A Winter in the West," and "Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie."

"There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will."

SHAKESPEARE.

In two volumes, New York, Harper & Brothers, 82 Cliff Street, 1840. [Although a copy of this second edition has not been discovered, *The New-Yorker*, Vol. IX, p. 257, in giving a second extended notice, following the notice the preceding week, says: "The first edition of Mr. Hoffman's new work was exhausted in four days after its publication and we have now before us a copy of the second impression."]

Greyslaer: A Romance of the Mohawk. By C. F. Hoffman, Esq., Author of "A Winter in the Far West" and "Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie."

"There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will."

SHAKESPEARE.

In three volumes, Vol. I [II and III], London: Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street, 1840. [Copy in the British Museum.]

Greyslaer: A Romance of the Mohawk. By the author of "A Winter in the West," and "Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie."

"There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will."

SHAKESPEARE.

In two volumes. A new edition corrected by the author. Philadelphia. Lea & Blanchard, 1841.

Greyslaer: A Romance of the Mohawk. By Charles Fenno Hoffman, Author of "A Winter in the West," "Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie," etc., etc.

"There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will."

SHAKESPEARE.

Fourth Edition. New York: Baker & Scribner, 145 Nassau Street, and 36 Park Row. 1849. 540 pp. [Jos. Sabin in his *Dictionary of Books Relating to America*, 1877, Vol. VIII, p. 360, no. 32385, lists an 1842 edition of *Greyslaer*, by Baker and Scribner in New York, but extended search reveals no such edition, the fourth edition being the only one issued by Baker and Scribner. Sabin does not list the 1840 editions.]

V. THE VIGIL OF FAITH, AND OTHER POEMS

The Vigil of Faith, and Other Poems. By C. F. Hoffman, Author of "Greyslaer," etc., New York. Published by S. Coleman: Sold by Collins, Brother & Co., Philadelphia: Thomas Cowperthwaite & Co., Boston: W. D. Ticknor. MDCCXLII. 84 pp.

The Vigil of Faith, and Other Poems, By Charles Fenno Hoffman, Campe's Edition. Nürnberg and New York. Printed and Published by Frederick Campe and Co. [n. d.] [Copy in the British Museum.]

The Vigil of Faith and Other Poems. By Charles Fenno Hoffman. Fourth Edition. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1845. vi, 7-164 pp. [Copy in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Although this is labeled the fourth edition, neither notices nor copies of a third edition have been discovered. Campe's edition is probably counted as the second.]

Songs and Other Poems. By C. F. Hoffman, Author of "Greyslaer," "Wild Scenes of the Forest and Prairie," "A Winter in the West," etc. Fifth Edition, complete. New York: Harper & Brothers, 82 Cliff St. 1846. 169 pp. [Although this book has a slightly different title from the first four editions, it is without doubt the fifth edition of *The Vigil of Faith and Other Poems*. A copy is found in the Library of the New York Historical Society.]

VI. THE ECHO: OR BORROWED NOTES FOR HOME CIRCULATION

The Echo: or Borrowed Notes for Home Circulation. By C. F. Hoffman, Author of "A Winter in the West," "Greyslaer," etc. "American Poetry is little better than a far off *Echo* of the Father Land. It is necessary to enter a little into this point, for the sake of exhibiting the *nature* as well as the *extent* of the Echo." British "Foreign Quarterly Review." Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, Chestnut Street, 1844. [*Imprint on cover*: New York: Burgess & Stringer, Philadelphia, G. B. Zieber & Co.]

VII. LOVE'S CALENDAR, LAYS OF THE HUDSON, AND OTHER POEMS

Love's Calendar, Lays of the Hudson, and Other Poems. By Charles Fenno Hoffman. New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1847, 221 pp. [Copy in the Peabody Institute, Baltimore, Maryland.]

Love's Calendar, Lays of the Hudson and Other Poems. By Charles Fenno Hoffman, New York: D. Appleton & Co., 200 Broadway, Philadelphia: Geo. S. Appleton, 148 Chestnut St., 1848. 221 pp. [Copy in the Library of New York Historical Society.]

Love's Calendar, Lays of the Hudson and Other Poems, by Charles Fenno Hoffman, New York: D. Appleton & Company, 346 & 348 Broadway. M. DCCC. LVIII. 221 pp. [Copy in the Library of the New York Historical Society.]

VIII. THE PIONEERS OF NEW YORK

The Pioneers of New York. An anniversary Discourse Delivered before the St. Nicholas Society of Manhattan, December 6, 1847. By C. F. Hoffman, New York: Stanford and Swords, 139. Broadway. 1848. 55 pp.

IX. THE POEMS OF CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN

The Poems of Charles Fenno Hoffman. Collected and edited by his Nephew, Edward Fenno Hoffman. Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1873. 7-238 pp. incl. front.

B. CONTRIBUTIONS TO PERIODICALS

So far in this study only those works have been assigned to Hoffman which are almost definitely known to be his, and which now seem to have some bearing on his life or his work as a whole. There are, however, numerous other articles and essays which can with some degree of certainty be ascribed to Hoffman. All contributions of this nature, as well as articles undoubtedly by Hoffman, are listed below under the magazines or miscellanies in which they appeared. In every case I have given my reason for assigning the work to Hoffman.

I. AMERICAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE

1. Nights in an Indian Lodge

- i) The Ghost Riders, Vol. V, pp. 62-77, March 1835.
- ii) The Last Offering to the Great Star, Vol. V, pp. 146-56, April 1835.
- iii) Nannabozho, Vol. VI, pp. 221-27, November 1835.

The general title for the three stories named above, "Nights in an Indian Lodge," was used again by Hoffman in *Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie*, Vol. I, pp. 123-26.

2. Leaves from the Notebook of an Old Bachelor, Vol. V, pp. 239-45, May 1835. This contains, among other things, Hoffman's "Boat Song," which is found in manuscript at the Library of the Pennsylvania Historical Society.
3. The Novels of Miss Sedgwick, Vol. I, New Series, pp. 15-25, January 1836. This seems to be by the editor, *i.e.*, Hoffman, and the opinion on Miss Sedgwick is similar to that expressed in the article on copyright, Vol. V, N.S., pp. 105-12.
4. Scenes and Stories of the Hudson. Some of these appear later in *Wild Scenes*.
 - i) Mohegan Ana, Vol. I, N.S., pp. 80-89, January 1836. R. W. Griswold copies part of this in *The Prose Writers of America*, 1854, pp. 460-62.
 - ii) A Deer Hunt, Vol. I, N.S., pp. 401-6, April 1836.
 - iii) Otne-yar-heh, or The Stone Giants, Vol. I, N.S., pp. 406-9, April 1836.
 - iv) The Spook-Visitor, Vol. II, N.S., pp. 14-21, July 1836.
5. Origin of Indian Corn, Vol. I, N.S., p. 293, March 1836. This appears later in *Wild Scenes*.
6. Origin of the Whippoorwill, Vol. II, N.S., p. 78, July 1836. This is here signed "MS. Notes of a Western Tourist." Later it appears in *Wild Scenes*. Full Title: "Waw-o-naisa, or The Origin of the Whippoorwill."
7. The sports of Ammon, Vol. II, N.S., pp. 79-89, July 1836. This article contains "Let There Be Light" (later called "Morning Hymn") and other poems known to be Hoffman's, and it is signed by initial "H."
8. Wild Scenes near Home: or Hints for a Summer Tourist, Vol. II, N.S., pp. 469-78, November 1836. This is unsigned, but the style, description, and especially an account of the history of early New York, one of Hoffman's favorite topics, all indicate Hoffman.
9. Alice Vere, Vol. II, N.S., pp. 563-72. This appears in *Wild Scenes* under the title of "The Missionary Bride," as well as in *The New-Yorker*, Vol. II, pp. 165-67, December 1836, where it is signed "C.F.H."

10. The Education of the Blood, Vol. III, N.S.; pp. 1-7, January 1837. This is unsigned, but is commented upon in *The New-Yorker*, January 7, 1837, p. 253, which often took delight in complimenting Hoffman, under "Our Magazines," as "worthy of the vigorous pen and manly spirit of its author." The exalting of "Native Americanism" also strongly suggests Hoffman.
11. Copyright. In a letter to Rufus W. Griswold, *Passages from the Correspondence and Other Papers*, 1898, p. 104, Hoffman gives Griswold a brief autobiographical statement for use in *The Poets and Poetry of America*. In this letter Hoffman gives Griswold permission to say that he had "written zealously in favor of international copyright." All of these articles but one are unsigned. This one, number iii below, is initialed "H.C.," which are very probably Hoffman's initials reversed for the purpose of disguise.
 - i) Copy-Right No. I. To the Writers of America, Vol. III, N.S., pp. 153-58, February 1837.
 - ii) Copy-Right Law No. II. To the Publishers of America, Vol. III, N.S., pp. 283-87, March 1837.
 - iii) Copy-Right Law No. III. To the Readers of the United States, Vol. IV, N.S., pp. 474-77, October 1837, signed "H.C."
 - iv) The New Copyright Law, Vol. V: N.S., pp. 105-12, February 1838.
12. A Sketch of Old Connecticut, Vol. IV, N.S., pp. 457-61. November 1837. This essay is initialed "H."

II. ANNUALS

1. The Gift: A Christmas and New Year's present, Philadelphia, 1844. This contains "Inman's Picture of Mumble-the-Peg, with the story of Nick Ten Vlyck," pp. 44-61, which is signed by C. F. Hoffman.
2. *The Wintergreen, A Perennial Gift*, for 1844, New York, [n.d.]. This gift book contains "My Familiar," pp. 227-37;

"New Year's Visiting in Hades," pp. 31-43; and "The Last Man," pp. 198-208.

4. *The Opal: A Pure Gift for the Holy Days*, New York, 1844. N. P. Willis, the editor of this book, includes "Scenes on the Mississippi; Yellow Jack" as by C. F. Hoffman, pp. 148-72.
4. *The Opal: A Pure Gift for the Holy Days*, New York, 1846. John Keese, the editor, gives "The Ambush of Ai," as by C. F. Hoffman, pp. 91-97.
5. *The Opal: a Pure Gift for the Holydays*, New York, 1847. John Keese again includes a selection from Hoffman, "Concerning Dogs." It is signed by C. F. Hoffman, and is found on pp. 191-94.

III. THE EVENING GAZETTE

1. Apalachia, and the Apalachians, March 6, 1845. This is identified as Hoffman's by a letter from Hoffman to Griswold, March 6, 1845. See p. 257 above.
2. Was Walter Scott a Poet, June 9, 1845. See pp. 99-101 above.
3. The Poetry of Trade, or Sunbeams from Cucumbers. November 1 and 3, 1845. Signed by Charles Fenno Hoffman.
4. The Inconvenience of Being Invisible, March 7, 1846. This is signed by Charles Fenno Hoffman.

IV. GODEY'S LADY'S BOOK

1. Love and Jupiter, Clairvoyant Sketches, by C. F. Hoffman, Vol. XXIX, pp. 166-68, October 1844.
2. Sentimental Crudities, Vol. XXX, pp. 34-37, January 1845. Hoffman is named as author.

V. GRAHAM'S MAGAZINE

1. Ben Blower's Story, or How to Relish a Julep. By C. F. Hoffman, Vol. XXI, pp. 132-34, September 1842. This essay also appears in R. W. Griswold's *The Prose Writers of America*, 1854, pp. 458-60.
2. The Enchanted Gun, A Tennessee Story. By C. F. Hoffman, Vol. XXII, pp. 61-64, February 1843.

3. The Fate of the Humming Bird, or The Buffalo Hunt. By C. F. Hoffman, Vol. XXV, pp. 97-99, September 1844.
4. Ho-Ta-Ma, or The Horse Trainer. By C. F. Hoffman, Vol. XXVI, pp. 261-3, June 1845.
5. Our Contributors—No. XIX. Rufus Wilmot Griswold Vol. XXVI, pp. 241-43, June 1845. For the authorship of this article, see E. A. Poe's statement in *The Broadway Journal*, Vol. I, p. 316 (May 20, 1845).

VI. THE KNICKERBOCKER

1. Introduction to the Public—By the editor, Vol. I, pp. 1-14, January 1835. This magazine doubtless contains other Hoffman contributions, but none have been definitely identified.

VII. THE LITERARY WORLD

During Hoffman's editorship the "Weekly Review" was a feature of this magazine. Doubtless many of the articles under this head are by Hoffman, but only those are cited which show strong marks of his authorship. Articles under "Sketches of Society" are all signed by Hoffman.

1. Sketches of Society

- i) The Dentist, Vol. III, pp. 702-3, October 7, 1848.
- ii) The Editor, Vol. III, pp. 722-24, October 14, 1848.
- iii) The Man in the Reservoir, Vol. III, pp. 751-53, October 21, 1848. This was copied by the Duyckincks in their *Cyclopædia of American Literature*, 1877, Vol. II, p. 319, by Charles Morris in *Half Hours with the Best American Authors*, 1899, Vol. IV, pp. 262-71, and by Rossiter Johnson in *Little Classics: Life*, Vol. IV, 1898, pp. 189-98.
- iv) How should the American Hero be Presented? Vol. III, pp. 773-74, October 28, 1848.
- v) October, Vol. III, pp. 790-91, November 4, 1848.
- vi) The Republic of Fashion, Vol. III, pp. 811-12, November 11, 1848.

- vii) Fascination, Vol. III, pp. 825-26, November 18, 1848.
 - viii) Fascination, concluded, pp. 846-48, November 25, 1848.
 - ix) Egeria, Vol. III, pp. 875-76, December 2, 1848.
 - x) The Destiny of Women, Vol. III, pp. 899-900, December 9, 1848.
2. "A Spicy Cut-Up of an Author," Vol. III, pp. 41-42, February 19, 1848. This is an editorial answer to a letter from a correspondent. Hoffman is the editor.
 3. To Correspondents—[On Writing Poetry,], Vol. III, p. 131, March 18, 1848. This article is addressed to correspondents by the editor, *i.e.*, Hoffman.
 4. North American Mythology, a review of *Inquiries respecting the History, the present condition, and future prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States*, in three articles, Vol. II, pp. 5-8; 29-33; and 59-61, for August 7, 14, and 21 respectively, 1847. The writer of this article is impressed by the belief of the Indians that they have two souls. Hoffman uses this and several other peculiarities of Indian mythology given here in *The Vigil of Faith*.

VIII. THE NEW-YORK MIRROR

1. The Twin-Doomed, Vol. XIV, pp. 329-30. By C. F. Hoffman.
2. Effie Gay, Vol. XIV, pp. 370-71. By C. F. Hoffman.
3. Natural Tunnel of Virginia, Vol. XIV, p. 389. By C. F. Hoffman.
4. The Last Arrow, Vol. XV, pp. 1-2. By C. F. Hoffman.
5. The Haunted Inn, Vol. XV, pp. 30-31. By C. F. Hoffman.
6. The Last Man, Vol. XV, p. 74. By C. F. Hoffman. This appeared also in *The Wintergreen, a Perennial Gift for 1884*, New York [n.d.], pp. 198-208.
7. Scenes at the Sources of the Hudson. Some of these later appear in *Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie*. The issue of October 7, Vol. XV, pp. 118-19, includes "Lake Henderson," "A Primitive Forest," "A Staunch Woodsman," "A Hunter's Camp," and "The Indian Pass," The next number, Vol. XV,

- pp. 124-25, presents "Village of McIntyre," "Earthquakes," "Forest Scenes," and "A Hunter's Stories." The third week, in Vol. XV, p. 132, there appears "Mount Marcy," "A Wolf Fight," "The Wounded Huntsman," and "A Generous Hound." On October 28, Vol. XV, pp. 140-41, the *Mirror* prints the selections "Crusting Moose," and "Withing a Buck."
8. The Dead Clearing, Vol. XV, pp. 193-94, by C. F. Hoffman.
 9. New Year's Visiting in Hades, Vol. XV, p. 209, by C. F. Hoffman. This is also found in *The Wintergreen, A Perennial Gift for 1844*, New York, [n.d.] pp. 31-43.

IX. THE NEW-YORKER

1. Alice Vere, Vol. II, pp. 165-66, December 3, 1836, signed "C.F.H." It also appears in *The American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. II, pp. 563-72, and in *Wild Scenes* under the title of "The Missionary Bride." See note on p. 323 above.
2. American Criticism, Vol. VII, p. 45, April 6, 1839. Hoffman was editor of *The New-Yorker* at this time. This same issue has his poem "Bob-O'Linkum," which had "Never before appeared in print," p. 49.
3. Old Things with New Faces, Vol. VIII, pp. 285-86, January 18, 1840. This also appears in *The Corsair*, Vol. I, pp. 725-26, January 25, 1840.
4. Review of Longfellow's *Voices of the Night*, Vol. VIII, pp. 286-87, January 18, 1840. In Hoffman's manner, and in the same issue with "Old Things with New Faces," pp. 285-86, this review is signed by Hoffman, who was at this time editor.
5. Review of Cooper's *Pathfinder*, Vol. VIII, p. 413, March 14, 1840. Hoffman was editor of this magazine at the time.
6. Criticism of Nathaniel Parker Willis, Vol. IX, p. 77, April 18, 1840. Hoffman was editor of the magazine at this time. The article expresses ideas known to be Hoffman's, as may be seen in his letter to John B. Van Schaik on pp. 88-89 above.

X. THE QUADRUPLE BOSTON NOTION

Melodies and Other Poems. By Charles Fenno Hoffman, June 10, 1841, pp. 5-11.

XI. ROBERT'S SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Melodies and Other Poems. By Charles F. Hoffman, Vol. I, pp. 419-26, June 15, 1841.

C. CALENDAR OF POEMS

Many of the poems used by Mr. Edward Fenno Hoffman in his 1873 edition of Hoffman's poems have been located in various newspapers and magazines. Since Mr. E. F. Hoffman in that edition classifies the poems under the headings of "Forest Musings," "Lays of the Hudson," "Love Poems," and "Songs and Occasional Poems," the same categories are adhered to in this index.

I. FOREST MUSINGS

1. The Hunt is Up. The first two of the six stanzas of this poem are found in *Wild Scenes*, Vol. II, p. 142, in an essay called "A Sacondaga Deer-Hunt."
2. What is Solitude? In *The American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. V, pp. 256-57, June 1835, and in the *New-York Daily Tribune*, December 22, 1845, p. 1, col. 1.
3. The Bob-O-Linkum. In *The New-Yorker*, Vol. VII, p. 49, April 6, 1839, and in *The Corsair*, Vol. I, pp. 234-35, June 22, 1839.
4. The Streamlet. In *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXIX, p. 12, July 1846.
5. A Hunter's Matin. In "A Sacondaga Deer-Hunt" in *Wild Scenes*, Vol. II, p. 127.
6. My Birchen Bark. In *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXIV, p. 197, October 1843.
7. The Brook and the Pine. In *Godey's Lady's Book*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 4, January 1844.

8. The Western Hunter to his Mistress. In *The American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. IV, p. 266, January 1835.
9. A Frontier Incident. This poem in *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXIII, p. 71, August 1843, under the title of "The Attack" has this preamble:

"A band of Mohawks, while the Iroquois forces were investing Montreal, attacked the country mansion of Sieur de M——. That gallant gentleman wounded in a recent Indian conflict, was confined to his bed by fever. Madame de M—— and her sister Claire were at evening prayers in the hall when the attack was made. An arrow which entering through the window nearly killed her boy, so excited the maternal feelings of the former that she was incapable of exertion; but the latter catching a musket from the wall, as she heard the strokes of the Indian tomahawks against the door, had the remarkable presence of mind to select the chief of the band, who stood at a distance, for her aim. He fell and his followers instantly dispersed in confusion.
Wars of Canada, MS."

10. The Ambuscade. In the *New-York American*, November 30, 1830.
11. Morning Hymn. In *The New-York Mirror*, Vol. XIV, p. 403, June 17, 1837.
12. Room, Boys, Room. In *Greyslaer*, 1840, under the title of "Song of Balt the Hunter," Vol. II, p. 61.

II. LAYS OF THE HUDSON

1. To the Hudson River. In *The American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. II, p. 108, August 1836.
2. Moonlight Upon the Hudson. In the *New-York American*, June 29, 1833.
3. Rhymes on West Point. This is found in the *New-York American*, May 10, 1828, and in *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXII, p. 368, June 1843.
4. The Forest Cemetery. In *The Gazette & Times*, January 20, 1847, under the title of "Tawasentha," and in *The Literary World*, Vol. I, p. 373, May 22, 1847.

III. LOVE POEMS

1. Love's Calendar is divided into thirty short poems to represent a calendar month.
 - i) First Day. In *The Southern Literary Messenger*, Vol. V, p. 792, December 1839, under the title of "Chansonette."
 - ii) Third Day. In *The American Monthly Magazine*, where it appears unsigned under the heading of "Scraps from an old Portfolio," with the subtitle of "Chansonette," Vol. II, p. 577, December 1836. It is also copied in *The New-Yorker*, Vol. II, p. 167, December 3, 1836.
 - iii) Fifth Day. The first stanza of this two-stanza poem is in the *New-York American*, April 6, 1833, under the title of "Resemblances."
 - iv) Twelfth Day. In *Wild Scenes*, Vol. II, p. 209, in the essay "Rosalie Clare."
 - v) Sixteenth Day. In *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXIV, p. 43, January 1844. Title: "Smiles and Tears."
 - vi) Eighteenth Day. This appears with music score composed by Giorgio Romani "written and composed for *Graham's Magazine*" in *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 188-89, April 1844.
 - vii) Twenty-third Day. In *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXI, p. 64, August 1842.
 - viii) Twenty-fourth Day. In *The American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. II, p. 107, August 1836.
2. The Blighted Heart. In the *New-York American*, May 8, 1830, under "Diary of a Young Man about Town."
3. "L'Amour Sans Ailes." In *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXI, indexed for p. 272, but appears on p. 278, November 1842.
4. Serenade. In *The American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. II, pp. 111-12, August 1836.

5. The Coquette. In *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXI, p. 191, October 1842, under the title of "The First and Last Parting."
6. Waller to Sacharissa. In *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXIV, p. 225, May 1844.
7. The Suicide. In the *New-York American*, December 18, 1830.
8. Think of Me, Dearest. In the *New-York American*, August 25, 1831.
9. Platonics. In the *New-York American*, August 17, 1833.
10. To A Lady. In the *New-York American*, June 4, 1830. This poem is signed by initial "F."
11. The Loon Upon the Lake. This is found in Henry R. Schoolcraft's *Oneota*, p. 405.
12. Translation of an Indian Love Song, called "Indian Sere-nade." In *A Winter in the West*, Vol. II, p. 18.
13. The Blush. In *The Southern Literary Messenger*, under the title of "Impromptu to a Lady Blushing," Vol. V, p. 787, December 1839.
14. Thy Name. In *The Corsair*, Vol. I, p. 306, July 27, 1839, and in *The New-Yorker*, Vol. IX, p. 53, April 11, 1840.
15. The Call of Spring. In *The New-Yorker*, Vol. IX, p. 53, April 11, 1840.
16. Written in a Lady's Prayer Book. This poem appeared unsigned in the *New-York American*, February 16, 1832, and in *Godey's Lady's Book*, Vol. XXXVI, p. 221, April 1848.
17. Myne Heartte. In the *New-York American*, February 24, 1831.
18. Withering, Withering. In *The American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. II, pp. 86-87, July 1836, under the title of "Lament."

IV. SONGS AND OCCASIONAL POEMS

1. Monterey. In *The Gazette & Times*, November 13, 1846, and in *Yankee Doodle*, November 14, 1846.
2. The Men of Churubusco. In *The Literary World*, Vol. II, p. 185, September 25, 1847.
3. Le Faineant. In *Graham's Magazine*, Vol. XXI, p. 8, July 1842.

4. Rosalie Clare. In the *New-York American*, April 26, 1833, and in the essay "Rosalie Clare" in *Wild Scenes*, Vol. II, p. 209.
5. Algonquin War Song. In *The Evening Gazette*, May 31, 1845, and in Henry R. Schoolcraft's *Oneota*, p. 348.
6. Algonquin Death Song. In *The Evening Gazette*, May 31, 1845, and in *Oneota*, p. 350.
7. Sparkling and Bright. In *The New-Yorker*, Vol. IX, p. 8, March 21, 1840.
8. Far Away. In *Godey's Lady's Book*, Vol. XXXVI, p. 102, February 1848, under the full title: "The Exile's Song —Far Away."
9. Anacreontic. In *The Corsair*, Vol. I, p. 257, July 6, 1839.
10. The Song of the Drowned. In *The American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. II, p. 106, August 1836, and in *The New-Yorker*, Vol. I, p. 359, August 27, 1836.
11. The Boat Song. The manuscript of this poem is in the library of the Pennsylvania Historical Society.
12. Birthday Thoughts. In the *New-York American*, February 12, 1831, unsigned.
13. The Thaw King. In the *New-York American*, April 16, 1831, and in *The New-Yorker*, Vol. I, p. 24, April 2, 1836. A separate pamphlet edition may have existed. See p. 37 above.
14. Brunt the Fight. In *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, Vol. XIV, p. 633, June 1844.
15. The Mint Julep. Under "Miscellany" in *The New-York Mirror*, Vol. XIV, p. 408, June 17, 1837, and in *The American Monthly Magazine*, Vol. II, p. 108, August 1836, under the title of "The Origin of Mint Juleps."

INDEX

The index includes no references to preface or bibliography. Nor does it include such general and frequently recurring geographical terms as *America*, *Atlantic* and *United States*. With these exceptions, I have attempted to list all proper names used in the book.

Works cited in the footnotes as *op. cit.* are so marked in the index, and are to be found through reference to the name of the author. Works cited in the footnotes as *ibid.* are indexed by title. All references to footnotes are followed by the abbreviation n. except when several consecutive page numbers are united in a single entry. A dash denotes repetition of only the first word in the preceding entry.

- Account of the Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Colonel James Smith, during his Captivity with the Indians in the Years 1755-1759*, An (Colonel James Smith), 49n.
- Adams, Herbert B., 159n.
- , John Quincy, 161
- Addison, Joseph, 96
- Adirondack Mountains, 172-73
- "Administration of Jacob Leisler, The" (Hoffman), 6n., 159
- Æschylus, 304, 304n., 305
- Affecting Scenes—Being Passages from the Diary of a Physician*, 94
- Agamemnon* (Æschylus), 304, 304n., 305
- Albany, N. Y., 25-26, 28, 31, 77, 91, 107, 133, 194, 196, 198, 206n., 215, 275, 290n.
- Albany Daily Advertiser, The*, 114-15
- Alexandrine, 139
- "Algonquin Death Song" (Hoffman), 258n.
- Algonquin Indians, 258
- "Algonquin War Song" (Hoffman), 258n.
- Alhambra, The* (Washington Irving), 119
- "Alice Vere" (Hoffman), 71, 71n.
- Alida de Roos (character in *Greyslaer*), 125-27
- Allegania, Alleghania (proposed name for United States), 161-62, 164, 257
- Alleghanian, The*, 263
- "Alleghanian Ambuscade, The" (Hoffman), 164
- Allegheny Mountains, 47, 162
- Alnwick Castle with Other Poems* (Halleck), 104, 255n.
- Alps, 163
- Altowan; or, Incidents of Life and Adventure in the Rocky Mountains* (ed. by James Watson Webb), 281n.
- "Ambuscade, The" (Hoffman), 199n., 247, 252
- America and Her Commentators* (Henry T. Tuckerman), 67n.
- American Biography* (Jared Sparks), 6n., 159, 279
- American Book Prices Current*, 173n.
- American Fur Company, 50
- American Genealogy* (Jerome B. Holgate), 2n.

- American Lands and Letters* (Donald Grant Mitchell), 63n., 90n. and as *op. cit.*
- American Literary Magazine, The*, 86n.
- American Monthly Magazine, The*, 38, 64, 68-72, 72n., 74n., 75, 75n., 76, 78-80, 82-83, 83n., 84-85, 87, 89, 90n., 96, 102, 105, 113, 116-17, 139, 209, 210n., 213n., 223, 255, 302n., 304n., 305n., 306n., 307n.
- American Monthly Review, The*, 70, 86n.
- American Philosophical Society, 8n.
- American Quarterly Observer, The*, 86n.
- American Quarterly Review, The*, 64
- American Revolution, 106. *See also* Revolutionary War
- American Scenery* (W. H. Bartlett), 116
- American Speech*, 11n., 19n.
- Ames, Fisher, 14
- , Seth, 14n.
- Anabaptists, 179
- "Anacreontic" (A. H. Bogart), 77n.
- "Anacreontic" (Hoffman), 79
- Andros, Sir Edmund, 160
- Ann Street, New York, 246
- Annals of Albany, New York, The* (J. Munsell), 26n.
- "Annette De Larbre" (Washington Irving), 254
- Ansonia, 162
- Anthon, Charles, 283n.
- , John, 283n.; letter 282-83.
- Anti-Jacobin Review, The*, 147
- Apollo, 309
- Apollo Dancing Rooms, New York, 58
- Apennines (Apennines), 163
- Appleton and Company, D., 171, 244, 257
- "Arctic Lover to his Mistress" (Bryant), 43
- Arcturus, A Journal of Books and Opinion* (ed. by Cornelius Mathews and Evert A. Duyckinck), 225, 225n.
- Aristotle, 284.
- "Articles of Association, The," 3.
- "Art of Rising in Prose, The," 96
- Aspinwall, Thomas, 105, 118-19, 121, 123-24; letters, 210-12, 213, 216-17, 219-20
- Assault and Battery* (Francis Bloodgood), 206n.
- Astor, John Jacob, 60
- Astor House, New York, 62
- Astoria* (Irving), 60, 120
- Astor Store (John R. Bartlett's bookshop in Astor House), 63
- Athenaeum, The*, 66, 123, 132
- Atlantic Street, New York, 246
- "Attack, The" (Hoffman), 229, 229n., 232
- "Attack, The" (picture), 229n.
- Ayton, Robert, 99
- Babcock, Rufus, 116n.
- Bacon, Francis, 175, 284
- Baker & Scribner, 276n.
- Balt (character in *Greyslaer*), 127, 129, 131
- Baltimore, Md., 188, 188n., 242
- Bancroft, George, 107, 109n., 159n., 178-79, 254
- Bard, Sam, 200
- Barker, Jacob, 60
- Barlow, Joel, 103, 262
- Barnes, Daniel H., 20n.
- Barousse, Mr., 253
- Bartlett, John R., 62, 245
- , W. H., 116
- Bartlett & Welford, 245
- Battery, New York, 5n., 58, 220
- Beauchampe* (William Gilmore Simms), 125

- Beauchamp-Sharp murder case,
124, 125, 127
- Beck, Lewis Caleb, 107
- Bedford, Pa., 48
- Beekman Street, New York, 262
- Beers, Henry A., 60n., 115
- Belgium, 2n.
- Bellerophon*, 16
- Bellinghausen, 282
- "Ben Blower's Story" (Hoffman),
131, 224, 224n.
- Benjamin, Park, 70, 82, 85, 89, 142,
235n.
- Bennett, James Gordon, 114-15
- Bent, A. H., 12n.
- Bentley, Richard, 66, 119, 121, 213,
216, 219
- Bentley's Miscellany*, 121, 213, 216
- Beppo* (Byron), 31n.
- Bethel Rock, 199n.
- Bethlehem, Palestine, 315
- Bethlehem, Pa., 200
- Bibliography of the Separate and
Collected Works of Philip Fre-
neau, A* (Victor Hugo Palt-
sits), 14n.
- Bigelow, George, 257; letter, 221
- Biographical Annual* (R. W. Gris-
wold), 228n.
- Biography of William Cullen Bry-
ant, A* (Parke Godwin), 35n.,
43n., 200n.
- Bird, Robert Montgomery, 80, 82-
84, 84n., 85, 102, 117, 210n.,
215n.; letters, 209, 209-10
- Blackwood's Magazine*, 224, 224n.
- Bleecker, Harmanus, 25-26, 26n.,
31, 107, 163, 215
- "Blighted Heart, The" (Hoffman),
296n.
- Bliss, E., 94
- Bloodgood, Francis, 206, 206n.
- Blue Hills, Mass., 12
- "Boat Song, The" (Hoffman), 174
- "Bob-O-Linkum, The" (Hoffman),
138n.
- Boeotian, 236
- Boeuf, J. F. A., 95
- Bogart, A. H., 77, 77n.
- , W. Henry L., 77, 77n.
- Bombay, India, 20n.
- Book B (County Clerk's Office,
Poughkeepsie, N. Y.), 3n.
- Book of Deeds* (County Clerk's Of-
fice, Kingston, N. Y.), 4n.
- "Book Publishers and Publishing"
(Earl L. Bradsher), 122n.
- Booth, Mary L., 9n.
- Boston, Mass., 12, 14-15, 15n, 61-
62, 70, 80-84, 88, 90, 108, 111,
153, 155, 199n., 222, 249-50,
258, 273, 276n.
- Boston Evening Transcript, The*,
182
- Boston Journal, The*, 162
- Boston Lyceum, 221
- Boston Miscellany, The*, 225, 225n.,
229n.
- Boston Monthly Magazine*, 86n.
- Boston Public Library, 69n., 125n.,
131n., 146n., 154n., 170n., 177n.,
222n., 223n., 225n., 227n., 230n.,
232n., 233n., 234n., 236n., 237n.,
238n., 239n., 240n., 241n., 243n.,
244n., 246n., 247n., 249n., 250n.,
251n., 253n., 255n., 256n., 257n.,
258n., 259n., 262n., 263n., 264n.,
267n., 270n., 271n., 272n., 274n.,
275n., 277n., 283n., 288n.
- Boston Quarterly Review, The*,
86n.
- Boston Times, The*, 231
- "Bouquet, The" (Hoffman), 299-
300
- Bourbon, 32
- Bowers, Claude G., 13n.
- Bowery Theatre, New York, 58,
132, 199
- Bowring, John, 259n.
- Boyd's Grove, Ill., 51
- Bracebridge Hall* (Washington Ir-
ving), 254

- Braddock, Edward, 49
 Braddock's Field, 49
 Bradford, William, 153n.
 Bradshawe (character in *Greyslaer*), 125-26
 Bradsher, Earl L., 122n.
 Braganza, 32
 Brant, Isaac, 128
 ———, Joseph, 105, 106n., 128, 133n.
 Brasleigh (character in *Vanderlyn*), 75
 Bray, Anna Eliza Kempe, 95
 Bread and Cheese Club, 59
 Brevoort Hall (Home of Henry Brevoort), 135n.
 Brevoort, Henry, 6n.
 ———, Mrs. Henry, 134
 Briggs, C. F., 263
 Brinckerhoffville, N. Y., 20n.
 Britain, 146n. *See also* England, Great Britain
 British, 16, 81, 100, 109-11, 147, 149, 212, 219. *See also* English
British Criticisms of American Writings, 1783-1815 (W. B. Cairns), 147n.
 Briton, 235
 Broadway, New York, 10, 25n., 96, 193, 244n., 245
Broadway Journal, The, 263
 Brodhead, John Romeyn, 179, 215n.
 Brooklyn, N. Y., 154n., 233, 241-42, 261
 Brooks, E. S., 5n.
 ———, Maria Gowen, 272, 272n.
 ———, Mr., 114
Brother Jonathan, 253, 253n.
 Brower, Cornelius, 20n.
 Brown, Charles Brockden, 11, 102
 ———, T. Allston, 133n.
Brownson's Quarterly Review, 176n., 177n.
 Brown University, Library of, 225n., 281n., 282n.
 "Brunt the Fight" (Hoffman), 240n., 241
 Bryant, William Cullen, 25n., 33, 35n., 40n., 41-43, 59, 78, 89n., 96, 98, 111-13, 115, 117, 141n., 143, 145, 157, 165, 172, 175, 184, 199, 200n., 235, 270, 289, 299n.
Bryant, and His Friends (J. G. Wilson), 166n.
 Buchanan, James, 110
 Buckeye (Hoffman's horse), 55
 Bulwer-Lytton, Edward, 94
 Bumpo, Natty, 117, 127
 Bunker Hill, 28n., 159
 Burgess, Wesley F., 244, 244n., 245, 252
 Burgoyne, John, 169
 Burke, Edmund, 265
 Burleigh, William H., 153n.
 Burns, Robert, 98, 100, 142
 Burr, Aaron, 9
 Bushkill Creek, Pa., 48
 Buttermilk Falls, N. Y., 44, 208
 Byron, George Gordon, Lord, 31, 31n., 75, 96-98, 101, 157, 175, 199, 223, 223n., 254, 267, 271
 "C" (Hoffman signature), 295n., 297, 297n.
Cabinet History of the British Isles (Sir J. Mackintosh), 92
 Cabinet of History, 94
 Cæsar, Julius, 266
Café Français, New York, 62
 Cairns, W. B., 147n.
 Calanthé (character in *Vanderlyn*), 75.
 California, 287
 "Calling-One's-Own (Ojibwa)" (Hoffman), 316n.; poem, 315-16
Cambridge History of American Literature, The, 122n., 124n.
 Campbell, 172
 Canada, 211

- Canadian border, 120, 123
 Canadians, 211
 Canal Street, New York, 58
 Canandaigua, N. Y., 98
 "Canzonet" (John B. Van Schaick), 77n.
 "Captive, The" (James Russell Lowell), 168
Career of Puffer Hopkins, The (Cornelius Mathews), 243n.
 Carey, Mathew, 240, 252
 Carey and Hart, 231n., 275n., 276, 276n., 277, 277n.
 Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 67
 Carlyle, Thomas, 164
 Caroline (boat), 212
 Caspar (nom de plume of Hoffman), 199, 290, 290n., 291-93
 Cass, Lewis, 207
 Castle William, 220
 Catholic, 242
 Caty (Hoffman family servant), 28n., 201, 204, 217-18. *See also* Katy
Century Magazine, The, 55n.
 Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel de, 41, 72n., 140n.
 Chamber of Commerce, New York, 7
 Chambers, Robert, 256n.
 Channing, Edward, 5n., 48n.
 Chantrey, Sir Francis Legatt, 209
 Chapel of Henry VIII, 58
 "Character of the People of Early New York, The" (Hoffman), 158
Charlemont (William Gilmore Simms), 125
Charles Brockden Brown (David Lee Clark), 11n.
 Charles O'Malley (Charles J. Lever), 253
 Charleston, S. C., 24, 224
Charleston Gazette, The, 98
 Charlottesville, Va., 46, 55
Charter, Constitution, By-Laws, and Lists of Members of the Saint Nicholas Society, 178n.
 Chauncey, Isaac, 39
 Cheney, John, 117-18, 129, 213n.
 Cherokee Indians, 213
 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, 242
 Chicago, Ill., 50, 50n., 51
 China, 219
 Chippewa Indians, 258
Churchman, The, 172
Church Review, The, 61, 62n.
 "Citizen, The" (Cornelius Mathews), 281n.
City Document of Marriages of Boston, No. 101, The, 15n.
 City Hall Park, New York, 5n.
 City Hotel, New York, 59, 73-74, 140, 178n.
 Clarence (Catherine Maria Sedgwick), 91
 Clark, David Lee, 11n.
 ———, Lewis Gaylord, 44, 63, 117
 ———, Willis Gaylord, 78-79
 Clark & Austin, 257
 Clay, Henry, 109-10
 Clearwater, Alphonso T., 3n.
 Cleveland, D., 50
Clinton Bradshaw (F. W. Thomas), 102, 255
 "Clytemnestra's Greeting" (Hoffman), 305
 "Cochrane the Dauntless," 16
 Cockloft Hall (near Newark, N. J.), 6n.
 Colburn and Bentley, 119
 Colden, Cadwallader, 179
 Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 101
Collection of Discourses Delivered on Public Occasions (John Stanford), 6n.
Collections of the New Jersey Historical Society, History of Elizabeth (Edwin Francis Hatfield), 5n.
 Colton, Calvin, 116

- Columbia, S. C., 33n.
 Columbia College, 24-25, 25n., 35, 36n., 39, 71, 116n., 254, 279, 283
 Columbia College, Board of Governors, 24-25
 Columbia University, 24n., 25n.
 Colyer, William H., 122
Commercial Advertiser, 21, 113-14, 117, 180, 209n.
 Common, Boston, 12
Complete Works of Edgar Allan Poe, The (ed. by James A. Harrison), 229n.
 Coney Island, N. Y., 118n., 192
Confessions of Harry Lorrequer, The (Charles J. Lever), 253n.
Congressional Globe, The, 111n.
Congressional Record, 112n.
 Congress of the United States, 26, 40n., 110, 110n., 111, 111n., 161, 248, 268
 Connecticut, 47
Constitution, The, 8
 Constitution of the United States, 8
 Consular Bureau, Department of State, 187
 Cooper, James Fenimore, 59, 61-62, 102, 111, 116-17, 127, 129, 165, 176, 180, 217, 260
Copyright in Congress, 1789-1904, Copyright Office, Bulletin No. 8 (Thorwald Solberg), 109n. and as *op. cit.*
 "Corn Song" (Hoffman), 258n., 259, 259n.; poem, 312-14
 Courtlandt-Street, New York, 21
 Cox, William, 13
 "Cradle Song" (Hoffman), 258n., 259; poem, 311-12
 Cranch, Christopher P., 154n.
 "Credit System in Literature, The" (James Gordon Bennett), 114
 Crichton, James, 30
 Crispell, Antonie, 2
 ———, Jannetje, 2
 "Crispell Family of Ulster County, New York, The" (Thomas G. Evans), 2n.
 "Croaker and Co" (Halleck), 60
 Cromwell, Oliver, 146n.
 Cronyn, George W., 316n.
 Cullen, Henry James, 45, 203
 "Culprit Fay, The" (Joseph Rodman Drake), 252
 Cumberland Gap, 55
 Cummins, Mr., 21n.
 Cunningham, Allan, 94
 Curtis, Benjamin F., 247
 ———, Capt., 15n.
 ———, G. W., 90
 ———, Mary, 15, 15n.
 ———, Peggy, 15n.
 ———, Polly, *see* Curtis, Mary
 Curtises, 15n.
 Custom House, New York, 136-37, 137n., 138, 165, 247-48
 Customs Office, New York, 138, 141
 Cyprus, 231
Daily Advertiser, 205, 205n.
Daily National Intelligencer, 263, 263n., 264
Daily News, 19n.
 Dana, Richard Henry, 59, 62, 165, 172
 Dane, The (Hamlet), 92
 Daniel, 99
 Daniels, C. F., 114
 "Dead Clearing, The" (Hoffman), 116, 121
 Dearborn, George, 76-78, 82, 115
 Decatur, Stephen, 11
 "Declaration, The" (Hoffman), 152-53, 237, 237n.
 "Deer Hunting by Torchlight" (engraving plate), 252
Deer Stalkers, The (Henry W. Herbert), 68n.
 DeKay, George Coleman, 221, 221n.

- DeKay, James E., 116
 Delaware River, 242
 Del Monicos (Delmonico's), New York, 282
 "Deluge-Canto I," 34n.
Democratic Review, The, 163-247.
 See also *United States Magazine and Democratic Review, The*
 Democrats, 137
 Denmark, 160
 Department of State, 187-88
 Derby, J. C., 226n.
 De Rutger family, 214
 "Destiny" (Hoffman), 304
 Detroit, Mich., 50
 Dewey, Orville, 116n., 117
 DeWindt, Elizabeth, 154n.
 Dewitt, Miss, 77
 "Diary of a Young Man About Town" (Hoffman), 295n., 296n.; poems from, 295, 296
Diary of Philip Hone, The (ed. by Allan Nevins), 42n.
Diary of Philip Hone, The (ed. by Bayard Tuckerman), 43n., 135n.
 Dickens, Charles, 110-11, 140, 140n., 146, 146n., 224
Dictionary of Americanisms (John R. Bartlett), 62
 "Discourse Delivered in the Orphan Asylum of New York on the Death of Mrs. Sarah Ogden Hoffman, A" (John Stanford), 6n.
Discourse on Matters Pertaining to Religion (Theodore Parker), 265, 265n.
 Disraeli, Benjamin, 198n.
 Division of Appointments, 136n., 187
 Document 10, Twenty-Eighth Congress, 111n.
 Document 187, Twenty-Seventh Congress, 110n.
- Documents relating to the Colonial History of the State of New York* (ed. by E. B. O'Callaghan), 4n.
Dollar Newspaper, 188n.
 Donaldson, Paschal, 315n.
 Drake, Janet Halleck, 221n.
 Drake, Joseph Rodman, 79, 221, 221n.
 Dramatic Festival, New York, 38n.
 Dresden, Germany, 11n.
 Drexel Institute, 188n.
 Drone: see also *Friendly Club*, 11
Dublin University Magazine, The, 147
 Duckworth, Sir Charles, 16
 Duer, George, 248
 ———, John, 39
 ———, William A., 30, 116n., 117, 206, 208, 279, 280
 Dunlap, William, 9, 38, 40n.
 Durant, Mr., 15n.
 Dutch, 44, 44n., 153, 178-80, 214-15, 215n., 298n.
 ——— Church, 5n.
 Dutchess County, N. Y., 2-3, 3n., 4
 ——— County Academy, Poughkeepsie, 20, 20n.
 Dutch language, 107
 ——— West India Company, 5n., 214
 Duyckinck, Evert A., 108, 176, 176n., 180, 185, 225n., 272, 281n.; letters to, 281, 282
 ———, G. L., 180
 Duyckincks, 181, 184
 Dwight, Thomas, 14
 ———, Timothy, 103, 262
- "Early Drama, The" (Arthur Hobson Quinn), 124n.
 "Early Lays" (Hoffman), 307
 "Early Miscellanies" (Hoffman), 237, 237n.
 East, the, 65
 East India Company, 20n.

- Easton, Pa., 48
 East River, 73
 Eaton, Captain, 268
Echo, or Borrowed Notes for Home Circulation, The (Hoffman), 144n., 148, 148n., 150n., 170, 237n., 239n., 243n., 244-45, 245n., 246, 249, 249n., 251n., 267, 273, 302n.
Edgar Allan Poe (Mary E. Phillips), 188n.
 Edinburgh, University of, 20n.
Edinburgh Review, The, 147
 "Education of the Blood, The" (Hoffman), 72
 "Effie Gay" (Hoffman), 116
 EFH (initials for Edward Fenno Hoffman), 191, 191n., 192n., 193n., 194n., 196n., 200n., 201n., 202n., 203n., 204n., 208n.
 "Egypt" (Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 227
 Elia (Charles Lamb), 156
 Ellsler, Fanny (dancer), 256
 Embury, Daniel, 230
 Embury, Emma C., 168, 230, 254, 254n., 272, 274
 Emerson, Ralph Waldo, 143, 256
 "Encompass'd in an Angel's Frame," 168
 England, 20n., 21n., 36, 59, 65-66, 81, 96, 96n., 101, 120-21, 123, 142, 157, 187, 211, 214, 216, 219-20, 239, 249, 266, 271. *See also* Britain, Great Britain
 English, 16, 49, 67, 81, 96-97, 101, 119-20, 122, 132, 142n., 153, 157, 178, 214, 269. *See also* British
 English language, 259n.
 Englishmen, 145, 219, 235-36, 265
 "Enigma" (Hoffman), 267, 267n.; poem, 308-9
 Ephesian, 33
 Episcopal Church, 21n.
 Erie Canal, 98
 Esopus (Kingston), N. Y., 1
 "Esquimaux Literature" (Robert C. Sands), 42
Eureka (Edgar Allan Poe), 283
 Europe, 29, 97, 140, 143, 200, 216, 220
 European, 60, 90, 153
 Evans, Thomas G., 2n.
Evening Gazette, The, 87, 98, 101n., 104n., 106n., 108, 114, 161, 161n., 162-63, 163n., 164-69, 169n., 170, 255n., 257, 258n., 259n., 260, 263-64, 269-71
Everyday English (Richard Grant White), 274n.
 Ewing, Thomas, 110
 Excelsior (motto of New York State), 180
Executive Documents, Twenty-Eighth Congress, First Session, The, 111n.
 "Extemp. to a Lady" (Hoffman), 296-97
 "Fair Student, The" (Hoffman), 311
 "Fairy Book, The," 78
 Family Library, 92
Famous Families of New York (Margherita Arlina Hamm), 1n. and as *op. cit.*, 2n. and as *op. cit.*, 7n. and as *op. cit.*
 Fanny (Halleck), 31n.
 "Fascination" (Hoffman), 25n., 218n.
 "Fate of the Humming Bird, The" (Hoffman), 234n., 238n.
 Fay, Theodore S., 79, 102, 116, 255
 Fearon, Henry B., 122n.
 "Feast of Shells, The," 151
 Federal Compact, 33n.
 Federalists, 9, 15
 Fenno, Charles, 16, 217
 ———, Edward, 17n., 18n., 24, 24n., 217

- Fenno, Euphemia, 201
 ———, George, 16, 200
 ———, James, 24, 24n.
 ———, John, 12-14, 14n., 15, 15n., 17n., 28n., 153
 ———, John Ward, 14, 14n., 15, 15n., 16, 17n., 217
 ———, Maria, 15-17, 18n. *See also* Hoffman, Maria Fenno
 ———, Mary Curtis, *see* Curtis, Mary
 Fenno family, 12, 17n., 28
 "Fenno Family, The" (A. H. Bent), 12n.
 Fenno Hill (now Kitchamakin Hill), Mass., 12
Fergus Historical Series, 50n.
 Field, David Dudley, 160, 163, 258, 271
 Fields, James T., 134, 136, 185
 Fifteenth Sepoys, 20n.
Fifty Years among Authors, Books and Publishers (J. C. Derby), 226n.
 Finland, Gulf of, 1
 "First and Last Parting, The" (Hoffman), 224n., 241
 Fish, Stuyvesant, 180n.
 Fishkill, N. Y., 24, 154n., 269
 Flint, Timothy, 44, 254
 Flodden, England, 99
 Florida, 212
 "Flower Girl of Antioch, The" (Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 226-27
 "Flying Head, The" (Hoffman), 132
 Fordham, N. Y., 286
Foreign Quarterly Review, The, 145, 234, 235n., 239, 239n.
 "Forest Cemetery, The" (Hoffman), 274n.
 "Forest Musings" (Hoffman), 174, 248
 Forman, Samuel E., 13n.
 Forster, John, 146, 146n.
 Fort (at the Battery, New York), 5n.
 Fort Hamilton, Long Island, N. Y., 246
 Foster, Emily, 11n.
 Foust, Clement E., 80, 80n., 83n.
 France, 2, 110
 Francis, C. S., 117
 ———, John W., 11, 39, 40n., 106n., 158, 158n., 262
Francis Berrian (Timothy Flint), 254
 Frank Forester (pseudonym of Henry W. Herbert), 68n.
 Freedom, Fredonia (proposed name for United States), 162
 Freemasonry, 7
 French, 16, 49, 254, 285
 ——— language, 30, 68n.
French Reader, or a Step to Translation by Progressive Exercises (J. F. A. Boeuf), 95
 French Revolution, 210
 Freneau, Philip, 13-14, 103, 145, 235, 262
 Friendly Club: *see also* Drone, 11
 Frisbie, Prof., 254
 Fronde, The, 2n.
 "Frontier Incident, A" (Hoffman), 229n.
 Fuller, Sarah Margaret, 256, 273
 F.W.X.Y.Z.S. (signature of anonymous contributor), 140n.
 Gallatin, Albert, 39, 117
 Ganges River, 139
Gazette and Times, The, 104n., 106n., 170, 177, 177n., 274, 274n., 275, 277, 277n.
Gems of American Poetry (R. W. Griswold), 136n., 244
General and Memorial History of the State of New Jersey (Francis B. Lee), 20n.
General History of Dutchess County (Philip H. Smith), 20n.

German, 20n., 92, 132, 153, 284n.
 ——— language, 283
 Germany, 100, 219
 "Ghost Riders, The" (Hoffman),
 121
*Gift: A Christmas and New Year's
 Present, The*, 231n., 310n.,
 311n.
 Gil Blas (character in *Gil Blas*),
 76
Gil Blas (Le Sage), 72, 72n.
 Gill, W. F., 229n.
 Gilman, C. R., 281n.
 Glenmary (home of N. P. Willis),
 116
 Godey, Louis A., 69n., 288
Godey's Lady's Book, 130, 154n.,
 314n.
 Godwin, Parke, 35n., 43n., 200n.
 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 92
 Goldsmith, Oliver, 17n., 146n.,
 170n., 256
 "Go, Lovely Rose" (Waller), 175,
 222
 "Go, Mocking Flower" (Hoffman),
 175, 222
 Gore, Christopher, 13
 Goth, 157
 Gouverneur, Abraham, 5
 ———, Gertrude, 5, *See also* Og-
 den, Gertrude Gouverneur
 ———, Mary Leisler Milbourne, 5
 ———, Nicholas, 6n.
 Graham, George R., 228-29, 234,
 238, 240, 247
Graham's Magazine, 136, 137n.,
 139-40, 150, 155, 165, 171, 224,
 229n., 230n., 232, 232n., 234n.,
 238n., 244n., 262n., 270
 Granger, Frank, 198
 "Granger" (Hoffman), 197
 Gratz, Rebecca, 55, 55n., 56n., 188-
 89, 202
 Great Britain, 110. *See also* Britain,
 England
 Greek language, 25n., 283n.

Greeley, Horace, 104n., 133-34, 222
 Green, E. M., 185n., 190n.
 Greene, Nathanael, 277
 Greenwich, Village of, 6
 ——— Street, New York, 9
Greyslaer (Hoffman), 75-76, 106n.,
 123-25, 126n., 128n., 130-34,
 136-47, 153, 157, 171, 182, 219,
 233
Greyslaer, Max (character in
Greyslaer), 126-27, 129, 131-
 32
 Griswold, Rufus Wilmot, 10n.,
 20n., 23n., 26n., 69n., 72n., 98,
 102-4, 111, 115, 125n., 131,
 131n., 134, 136n., 140-41, 141n.,
 142, 144-45, 146n., 147-48,
 148n., 151-53, 153n., 154, 154n.,
 166, 170, 170n., 177n., 185,
 188n., 221n., 222n., 227n., 228n.,
 229n., 230n., 231n., 235, 243n.,
 245n., 249n., 255n., 259n., 263n.,
 276n., 277n., 278-80, 282; let-
 ters, 221-22, 222-23, 224, 226-
 27, 227-30, 230, 230-32, 232,
 233, 233-34, 234-36, 237, 237-
 38, 238-39, 239-40, 240-41, 241-
 43, 243-44, 244-46, 246-47, 248-
 49, 249-50, 250-51, 252-53, 253,
 253-55, 255-56, 256-57, 257-58,
 258-59, 259-60, 261-62, 262-63,
 263-64, 264-67, 269-70, 270-71,
 271-72, 272, 272-74, 274-75,
 275-77, 277, 287-88
 ———, W. M., 72n., 90n., 98n.,
 102n., 103n., 134n., 136n., 146n.,
 153n., 166n., 185n., 227n., 259n.,
 262n., 276n.
 Guildenstern (character in *Ham-
 let*), 93
 Guy (Hoffman dog), 218
 "H" (Hoffman signature), 36, 68-
 70, 295n., 297, 297n., 299-301,
 304, 304n., 306, 306n.
 Hague, The, Holland, 26

- Hall, James, 96
 Halleck, Fitz-Greene, 25n., 31n., 33, 40n., 59-60, 62, 78, 96, 103-4, 115-17, 143, 197, 255, 255n., 257
 Hamilton, Alexander, 8-9, 13, 152
 ——— County, N. Y., 258
 Hamlet (character in *Hamlet*), 92-93, 189n.
Hamlet (Shakespeare), 92
 Hamm, Margherita Arlina, 1n., 3n., 7n., 8n., 11n.
Handbook of Heraldry (T. W. G. Mapleson), 282n.
 Hanover Square, New York, 58
 Harper, Fletcher, 107, 115
 ———, J. E., 136n., 187n.
 ———, James, 269
 ———, John, 269
 ——— and Brothers, 102, 104, 107, 121-23, 216, 255n., 269, 271, 276
 Harrisburg, Pa., 48-49, 189-90
 ——— State Hospital, 189, 190n.
 Harrison, James A., 229n.
 Harrison, Mitchell C., 7n.
 Hart, Abraham, 280n.; letters to, 278-79, 280
Hartford Courant, The, 182-83
 Harvard University, 70
 Hastings, Warren, 20n.
 Hatfield, Edwin Francis, 4, 5n.
 "Haunted Inn, The" (Hoffman), 116
Hawks of Hawk Hollow, The (Robert M. Bird), 102
 Hayne, Robert Young, 33
 Head, Sir Francis Bond, 211
 Headley, Joel Tyler, 276, 276n.
 "Heart-Augury" (Hoffman), 309-10
 "Hearts" (Hoffman), 297
Heavenly Sisters or Biographical Sketches of the Lives of Thirty Eminently Pious Females, The (T. Sharp), 6n.
 Hebrew, 315, 315n.
 Hebrides, 99
Heidenmauer, The (Cooper), 59
 Hellman, George S., 11n.
 Hemstreet, Charles, 10n., 58n., 62n., 63n.
 Henry VIII, Chapel of, 58
 Herbert, Henry W., 68, 68n., 69n., 70, 117, 236
 Herkimer, Nicholas, 128
Hesperian, The, 86n.
 Hewet, H. W., 168-69
Hewel's Excelsior and New York Illustrated Times, 168-70, 170n., 177n., 272, 272n.
 Highlands, Scotland, 100
 Highlands of the Hudson, 114, 139
 Hillhouse, James Abraham, 33, 96, 103, 262
 Hirst, Henry B., 229n.
History of Columbia University, 1754-1904, A, 25n.
History of Dutchess County (James H. Smith), 20n.
History of Morris County, 21n.
History of New Netherland (E. B. O'Callaghan), 1n.
History of New York (Mary L. Booth), 9n.
History of New York City (William Leete Stone), 8n. and as *op. cit.*
History of Philadelphia (John Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott), 12n., 242n.
History of the American People, A. (Woodrow Wilson), 5n.
History of the City of New York (Martha Lamb), 9n.
History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus, A. (Washington Irving), 95
History of the New York Stage, A. (T. Allston Brown), 133n.
History of the United States (Bancroft), 109n.

History of the United States, A.
(Edward Channing), 5n., 48n.
History of Ulster County, New York,
The (Alphonso T. Clearwater), 3n.

Hobart, B., 254

Hoffman, Adrian, 7

——, Ann, 19, 19n., 196

——, Anthony (Colonel), 4

——, Anthony (Judge), 2-3

——, Anthony N., 7

——, Aunt, 34, 192

——, Beekman V., 8

——, Edward Fenno, 10, 15, 15n., 31n., 55n., 61n., 175, 189, 191, 218n., 289, 302n., 307n.

——, Emily, 17n.

——, Eugene Augustus, 5n., 15, 19n.

——, George E., 28n., 29, 29n., 30, 34, 34n., 35n., 37n., 44n., 45n., 46n., 55n., 60, 124, 189, 207, 208n., 217-18; letters, 191, 192, 193, 193-94, 194, 196, 199-200, 200, 200-1, 201-2, 202-3, 203, 204, 204-5, 207, 208

——, Harmanus, 4, 7

——, Jannetje, 2

——, Josiah Ogden, 7-11, 16-17, 21-23, 27n., 28, 28n., 29, 39, 193, 193n., 201-2, 202n., 204, 205n.

——, Julia, 28n., 124, 188, 200-2; letters, 217-18

——, Maria Fenno, 16, 19, 22-23, 201. *See also* Fenno, Maria

——, Martin (Captain), 4

——, Martin (Colonel), 2-3

——, Martin Hermanzen, 1, 2, 153. *See also* Hoffman, Martinus

——, Martin (merchant), 7, 196n., 200n.

——, Martinus, 7. *See also* Martin Hermanzen

——, Mary, 4n.

Hoffman, Mary Colden, 295n.

——, Mary Frances Seton, 196n., 200n.

——, Matilda, 11, 11n., 196, 200-1

——, Nicholaes, 2-3

——, Nicholas, 4, 4n., 7

——, Nicholas (cousin to the Nicholas first mentioned), 4n.

——, Ogden, 10, 10n., 11, 17n., 39, 40n., 204, 230, 247

——, Philip, 4

——, Philip Verplanck, 7

——, Phoebe, 191

——, Richard Anthony, 8

——, Richard Kissam, 7

——, Robert, 4

——, Sarah Ogden, 6. *See also* Ogden, Sarah

——, William, 7

——, Zecharias (Captain), 2

——, Zecharias (Lieutenant), 4

——, Zecharias II, 3

——, family, 2-4, 7n., 8, 16, 28, 28n., 30, 55, 203, 218n.

Hoffman Family Letters (ed. by E. F. Hoffman), 15n., 16n., 17n., 18n., 24n., 218n.

Hoffman Genealogy (Eugene Augustus Hoffman), 5n., 15 and as *op. cit.*

Hoffman's Falls, 118

Holden, Charles W., 182

Holden's Dollar Magazine, 182

Holgate, Jerome B., 2, 2n.

Holland, 20n., 107, 214-15, 215n.

Homer, 271

Hone, Philip, 39, 43, 117, 135n.

Honeymoon, The (John Tobin), 133

Hope Leslie (Catherine Maria Sedgwick), 91

Hopkins, Puffer (sobriquet of Cornelius Mathews), 243, 243n.

Horse-shoe Robinson (John Pendleton Kennedy), 102

- House Documents of Congress*, 110n.
 House of Representatives (U. S. Congress), 111-12
 Howe, Samuel G., 83, 83n.
 Hudson, Hendrick, 178
 ———, Henry Norman, 256
 ——— River, 98, 117, 119, 122-23, 139, 157
 Huguenots, 2, 153, 160, 262
 Hulbert, Randolph, 255, 255n.
 Hunt, Leigh, 90
 "Hunting Buffalo" (engraving), 238n.
Hunt's Merchants' Magazine, 168
 Hutchinson, Thomas, 159n.
 Hutles, Mrs., 201
 Hymself, R. T., 11n.
- Illinois, 67
 "Incident of the Fire at Hamburg, An" (Lowell), 103
 "Inconvenience of Being Invisible, The" (Hoffman), 167
 "Increase of Novel Writing" (Hoffman), 102n.
 India, 20n.
 India House, office of East India Company in London, 137
 Indiana, 50
 Indians, 1, 11, 49, 53, 67, 70, 76, 105, 108, 120-21, 127-28, 132, 138n., 139, 158, 160, 172-76, 199, 199n., 209, 216, 240, 240n., 247, 256, 258, 281n., 302n., 315n., 316n.
 "Indian Summer" (Hoffman), 138n., 141n.
 Ingersoll, Charles Jared, 273
In Leisler's Times (E. S. Brooks), 5n.
 Inman, John, 40n., 116-17, 252
 "Inn of Wolfswald, The" (Hoffman), 121
 "Intellectual History, Condition and Prospects of the Country, The" (R. W. Griswold), 227n.
- International Miscellany of Literature, Art, and Science, The*, 286n.
 "Involuntary Experimentalist, The," 224n.
 Irish, 242, 242n., 253n.
 Irving, Pierre M., 11n., 16n., 19n., 23n., 28n., 67n., 111n., 119n.
 ———, Washington, 6n., 9, 11, 11n., 16, 19, 19n., 22-23, 25n., 28n., 38, 55n., 56n., 59, 61, 67, 79, 89, 95, 98, 110-11, 115-17, 119-20, 140, 140n., 163, 184, 214, 217, 248, 254
 ———, William, 6n.
 Italian, 228
 ——— language, 30
 Italy, 100, 157
Ivanhoe (Scott), 55n., 56n., 97, 101
- Jackson, Andrew, 266
 "Jack Spanker and the Mermaid" (Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 104, 232n.
 Jacobs, Joseph, 56n.
 James, George Payne Rainesford, 101
 Jameses, the, kings of Scotland, 99
 Jameson, Anna Brownell, 120
 Janvier, Francis D., 154n., 237-40, 240n., 241-42, 245, 247, 253
 ———, Margaret Thomson, 240n.
 ———, Thomas Allibone, 240n.
 Jay, John, 8, 112
 Jefferson, Thomas, 9, 13
Jefferson and Hamilton (Claude G. Bowers), 13n.
 Jeffrey, Lord Francis, 100
 Jeptha's Daughter (character in Willis's *Sketches*), 88
 Jesup, Thomas, 212
 Jewish, 56n.
Jewish Record, 56n.
 John Bull, 211, 219
 ——— Bullism, 145, 234

- John Keese, Wit and Litterateur* (William Keese), 63n. and as *op. cit.*, 185n.
- Johnson, Samuel, 99, 278
- Jonah, 236
- Jonathan, Brother, 219
- Jones, John, 165
- , Samuel, 180
- Joselyn (character in *Vanderlyn*), 75
- Joseph and Company, J. L. and S., 209, 209n.
- "Joshua Commanding the Sun and Moon to Stand Still" (John B. Van Schaick), 77n.
- "Journalist, The" (Cornelius Mathews), 281n.
- Journal of Health, The*, 203
- Junius (pseudonym of Sir Philip Francis), 254
- "Justice" (Hoffman), 305-6
- Kachesco (character in "The Vigil of Faith"), 173-74
- Katy (Fenno family servant), 28, 28n., 124. *See also* Caty
- Kean, Charles John, 92-93
- Keese, John, 115, 117, 141, 152-54, 154n., 224, 225n., 231, 232n., 233, 255n., 311n.; letter to, 225
- , Willetts, 233
- , William, 63n., 134n., 185n.
- Kelby, Robert H., 180n.
- Kemble, Gouverneur, 6n.
- Kenilworth* (Scott), 101
- Kennedy, John Pendleton, 102
- Kent, James, 8, 39, 40n., 163
- Kentuckian, 52
- Kentucky, 47, 67, 124
- River, 54
- Kepler, Johann, 284, 284n.
- King, Charles, 35-36, 36n., 39, 40n., 46, 106n., 116n., 117, 202, 226
- , Charles R., 13n.
- , E., 270
- King, J. A., 39
- , Rufus, 13, 36
- , William G., 167
- Kingston (Esopus), N. Y., 1
- , County Clerk's Office of, 4n.
- Kirkbride, Thomas S., 186, 188-89, 314n.
- Kissam, James B., 22
- Kitchamakin Hill, Mass., 12
- Knickerbocker, The*, 43-44, 44n. *See also* *Knickerbocker, The*
- Knickerbockers, 44n.
- Knickerbocker, The*, 42, 44, 44n., 64, 68, 79, 109, 129, 141, 151, 205, 207n., 239. *See also* *Knickerbocker, The*
- Knickerbockers, 44n., 60, 77-78, 80, 90, 153, 157, 214
- Knox, Henry, 14
- , John, 99
- "Lady of the Lake, The" (Scott), 101
- Laelius (signature of a correspondent in *The Southern Times*), 33n.
- Laet, Johannes de, 179n.
- Lafayette College, 48
- Lafitte (character in *Tokeah, or the White Rose*), 138n.
- Lamartine, Alphonse de, 283
- Lamb, Charles, 137, 157, 227
- Lamb, Martha, 9n.
- Lancashire, England, 12
- Landon, Letitia E., 96, 96n.
- Landor, Walter Savage, 146n.
- "Language of Flowers" (Hoffman), 138n.
- Laplace, Pierre Simon de, 284-85
- Lardner, Dionysius, 94
- "Last Arrow, The" (Hoffman), 116
- "Last Man, The" (Hoffman), 116
- "Last of the Race, The" (Hoffman), 315

- Latin, 20n., 214
 Latin language, 25n., 283n.
 "Lays of the Hudson" (Hoffman), 176
 Lea and Blanchard, 233. *See also* Carey, Lea and Blanchard
 Leatherstocking (character in Cooper's novels), 129, 132
 "Lectures before the Mercantile Library Association," 116n.
 Lee, Francis B., 20n.
 "Legend of Bethel Rock, The," 199n.
Legendary, 199, 199n.
Legends of a Log Cabin (C. R. Gilman), 281n.
 Leggett, William, 40n., 79, 98, 117
 Leisler, Jacob, 5, 5n., 6, 6n., 157, 158n., 159-60, 214
 ———, Mary, *see* Gouverneur, Mary Leisler Milbourne
 Leonard Street, New York, 10
 Le Sage, Alain René, 41, 41n., 72n.
Letters and Journals of Lord Byron, with Notices of his Life (Thomas Moore), 94
 Lever, Charles J., 253n.
 Lewiston, Maine, 255n.
Lexicon of Useful Knowledge (H. Wilbur), 92
Life and Correspondence of Rufus King, The (Charles R. King), 13n.
Life and Letters of Bayard Taylor (ed. by Marie Hansen-Taylor and Horace E. Scudder), 155n., 278n.
Life and Letters of Christopher Pearse Cranch, The (Leonora Cranch Scott), 154n.
Life and Letters of Fitz-Greene Halleck, The (James G. Wilson), 116n.
Life and Letters of Washington Irving, The (Pierre M. Irving), 16n., 19n. and as *op. cit.*, 111n., 119n.
Life and Writings of Jared Sparks, The (Herbert B. Adams), 159n.
Life of Alexander the Great (John Williams), 92
Life of Byron (Moore), 204
Life of Edgar Allan Poe, The (W. F. Gill), 229n.
Life of George Washington, The (Irving) 60
Life of Joseph Brant—Thayendanegea, Including the Indian Wars of the American Revolution (Colonel Stone), 105, 213n.
Life of Major General Zachary Taylor (H. Montgomery), 277n.
Life of Robert Burns (John Gibson Lockhart), 95
Life of Robert Montgomery Bird, The (Clement E. Foust), 80n. and as *op. cit.*
 Lindsay, Lord, Alexander William Crawford, 99
 Lindsay and Blackiston, 245, 245n., 251n.
 "Lines Written in an Album" (W. H. L. Bogart), 77n.
Linwoods, The (Catherine Maria Sedgwick), 102
Literary and Theological Review, The, 86n.
 Literary Jubilee of Columbia College, 25n.
Literary New York (Charles Hemstreet), 10n. and as *op. cit.*
Literary Societies and Associations in New York City 1790-1830 (R. T. Hymselfeld), 11n.
Literary World, The, 25n., 62n., 87, 90, 103, 108-9, 133, 172, 176, 176n., 177, 177n., 180, 182, 184, 186-87, 218n., 274n., 275, 278,

- 280, 281n., 282, 282n., 283, 283n.
Literature of the Middle Western Frontier, The (Ralph L. Rusk), 86n.
 Liverpool, England, 22-23
Lives of Eminent British Statesmen (John Forster), 146n.
Lives of Painters and Sculptors (Allan Cunningham), 94
 Livingston, John B., 20n.
 Lockhart, John Gibson, 95
 Logan, Adam D., 29, 193
Log Cabin, The, 133
 Lomond, Loch, Scotland, 99
 London, 63, 66, 81, 97, 100, 118, 124, 176, 216, 273, 289n.
London Examiner, The, 131
London Quarterly, The, 100
 Longfellow, H. W., 143, 146, 165, 273
 Long Island, N. Y., 73, 192
 "Loon upon the Lake, The" (Hoffman), 258n.
 Lord, W. W., 106, 106n., 255, 255n., 257
 Loring, Joshua, 12
Lorna Doone (Richard D. Blackmore), 74
 "Love Quarrel, The" (Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 226
Love's Calendar, Lays of the Hudson, and other Poems (Hoffman), 171, 300n., 301n.
 "Love's Calendar, or Eros and Anteros" (Hoffman), 37n., 46n., 175, 182, 224n., 237, 237n., 301n.
 Lowell, James Russell, 103, 146, 165, 168, 260
 Lynch, Patrick, 54
 Mabbott, Thomas Ollive, 124n, 125n., 139n., 229n., 259n., 286n.
 Mabie, H. W., 59n.
 Macaulay, Thomas B., 273
 McCulloch, George Perrott, 20, 20n.
 McCulloch's School, Morristown, N. Y., 24
 "Machineton" (Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 226
 Mackenzie, Alexander Slidell, 40, 72n., 276, 276n.
 MackIntosh, Sir J., 92
 McLeod, Alexander, 219
 McNab, Sir Allen Napier, 211-12
 McVickar, John A., 254
 Madrid, Spain, 20n.
 Magdrum, Mr., 287
 Magyar, 258, 259n.
 Maiden Lane, New York, 13
 Maine, 219
 "Major's Story, The" (Hoffman), 120
 "Mammoth Cave of Kentucky, The" (Robert Montgomery Bird), 83
 "Manfred," 122
 Manhattan Island, New York, 44n., 160, 169
Manual of American Literature, A. (Theodore Stanton), 138n.
 Mapleson, T. W. G., 282n.; letter to, 282
 Marcy, William, 267n.; letters, 267-68, 268
 Market Street, Philadelphia, 185n.
 "Marriage Ring, The" (Hoffman), 314n.; poem, 314
 Marshall, Michigan Ter., 45n.
 Mary (chambermaid), 183
 Masonic Hall, New York, 58
 Massachusetts, 13, 47, 159
 Massachusetts Historical Society, 161
 Matanzas, Cuba, 272n.
 Mathews, Cornelius, 225, 225n., 243n., 281, 281n.
 Matthews, Brander, 109n.
Mayflower, 179
 "Medicine Song of an Indian Lover" (Hoffman), 302n.

- Mediterranean, 98
 Mellen, Grenville, 116
 Melville, Herman, 104, 185
Memorial History of Boston (ed. by Justin Winsor), 12n.
Memorial History of the City of New York, The (ed. by J. G. Wilson), 6n. and as *op. cit.*, 9n. and as *op. cit.*, 117
 Methuselah, 48
 Metropolitan Park Commission, 12
 Mexican, 165, 187, 268
 Mexico, 165n., 268
 Michigan, 52, 67
 Middle Western States, 47
 Milbourne, Jacob, 5, 5n., 159n., 160
 ———, Mary Leisler, 5
 Milo (Greek athlete), 33
 Milton, Mass., 12
 Minnesota Historical Society, 19n.
 Minnigerode, Meade, 185n.
 "Miscellany" (column in *The Literary World*), 281, 281n.
 "Mishaps of Authors," 182
 "Missionary Bride, The" (Hoffman), 121, 132
 Mississippi Valley, 51
 Mitchell, Donald Grant, 63, 90n., 190
 ———, Samuel L., 162
 Mohawk Country, 130
 ——— River, 126
 Molony-Neely, Mrs. Ann Hoffman, 19n.
 Monongahela, 236
 "Monterey" (Hoffman), 166
 Monterey, Mexico, 268
 Montgomery, H., 277n.
 "Moonlight on the Hudson" (Hoffman), 79, 138n., 139, 174, 252
 Moore, Clement C., 79
 ———, Thomas, 94, 98, 142, 144-45, 148, 150-51, 154, 156, 175, 184, 204, 235
 "Morals, Manners, and Poetry of England, The," 146n.
 Mordecai, Major, 56n.
 Moriarty, Dr., 242
Morning Courier and New York Enquirer, 35n., 36n., 167, 273, 281n.
Morning Herald, The, 21, 21n., 86, 114n., 115n., 135n.
 "Morning Hymn, The" (Hoffman), 175
 Morris, George P., 60-61, 114, 116-17, 175, 223, 245, 245n., 246n., 269-70
 ———, Gouverneur, 179, 254
 Morristown, N. J., 21, 21n.
 Morton, Thomas, 99
 Moulton, Joseph White, 107
 Mount Upton, N. Y., 200
 Mowatt, Anna Ogden, 224
 Munsell, J., 26n.
 Murphy, Mr., 108
 Murray, James Stuart, Earl of, 99
 ——— Street, New York, 222, 280, 281n.
My Shooting Box (Henry W. Herbert), 68n.
 Nahant, Mass., 249
 Napier, John, 99
 Napoleon, Bonaparte, 16, 20n.
Napoleon and his Marshals (Joel Tyler Headley), 276n.
Narrative of the Most Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Colonel James Smith, A., 49
Nathaniel Parker Willis (Henry A. Beers), 60n., 115
National Gazette, The, 13-14
 "Natural Tunnel of Virginia, The" (Hoffman), 116
 Navy Island, Niagara, Ontario, 211
 Navy Islanders, 211
 Neafie, A. J., 133n.

- Neal, John, 165, 225n., 231, 253, 253n.
Neal's Saturday Gazette, 275, 275n.
 Neely, Mrs. Charles M., 19n.
 Nevins, Allan, 42n.
 New, Jacob L., 227n.
 New Amsterdam, 5n.
 Newark, N. J., 4, 6n, 8
 New Brunswick, N. J., 60
 Newburgh, N. Y., 204
 New England, 1, 103, 107, 153, 158, 159n., 164, 178-79, 179n., 180, 180n.
New England Magazine, The, 64, 70, 82, 83n., 86n.
New England Tale, A (Catherine Maria Sedgwick), 26
 New Granada, Republic of, 39
 New Jersey, 20n., 257, 269
 New Jersey Historical Society, 280
New Monthly Magazine, The, 172
 New Netherland, 1, 178-79, 179n.
 New Orleans, La., 51, 209n.
 New Paltz, N. Y., 2
 New Rochelle, N. Y., 262
 New Street, New York, 62
 Newton, 183
New Voices (Marguerite Wilkin-son), 316n.
New World, The, 140n., 142n., 145, 235, 235n.
 "New Year's Visiting in Hades" (Hoffman), 116
 New York, General Committee for the City and County of, 4
 New York, N. Y., 4, 8, 10, 12-14, 19, 19n., 20n., 21n., 28, 35, 38, 40, 42, 54-56, 58-59, 61-63, 67-68, 70, 73-75, 77, 77n., 78, 80, 83, 85, 98, 104n., 106, 106n., 111, 116, 118, 118n., 119, 122, 124, 129-30, 133-34, 136-37, 140, 148, 150, 152, 155, 157, 160, 172, 175, 176n., 177n., 178, 184n., 193-94, 196, 199-200, 202, 202n., 203-4, 210, 213, 213n., 219, 221, 223-24, 227, 233n., 238, 241, 246, 248, 252-53, 255, 256n., 261-64, 269, 272, 279-80, 281n., 282n., 283n., 312n., 315, 315n., 316n.
 New York, Orphan Asylum of, 6
 New York (state), 1, 5, 5n., 8, 8n., 16, 26, 26n., 35n., 36, 39, 76, 77n., 78-79, 106-8, 123, 158, 158n., 159n., 168n., 172, 178-80, 214, 283
 New York, Surrogate, City Hall, 10n.
 New York, Surrogate of the County of, 10
New York American, 31, 33n., 35, 35n., 36-37, 37n., 38, 38n., 41-44, 44n., 46, 48n., 49n., 50n., 54, 55, 63, 67-68, 77n., 87, 91, 91n., 92, 92n., 93n., 94, 94n., 95, 95n., 96n., 97, 130, 142n., 151, 167, 171, 199n., 202, 206n., 230, 230n., 295n., 296n., 297n., 298n., 299n., 300n., 301n.
 New York Assembly, 9
New-York Book of Poetry, The, 77, 77n., 78, 80, 209
 New York City directory, 136n.
New York City Directory for 1827-1828, The, 27n.
New York City Directory, The, 1829, 193n.
New York City Directory for 1846 and 1847, The, 166n.
New York City in Olden Times; Consisting of Newspaper Cuttings Arranged by Henry Onderdonk, Jr., 5n.
New York Code (David Dudley Field), 160
New-York Commercial Advertiser, 25n.
New-Yorker, The, 41n., 71, 71n., 72, 77n., 78-79, 79n., 84-85, 85n., 86n., 87, 89, 116n., 122, 133-34, 141n., 223, 307n.

- New Yorkers, 78, 80-81, 158, 160
New-York Evening Post, The, 21,
 39n., 40n., 41, 41n., 44n., 60,
 72n., 98n., 132-33, 137, 137n.,
 138n., 163, 163n., 176n., 177,
 242, 295n.
New-York Gazette, 21, 21n.
*New York Genealogical and Bio-
 graphical Record*, 2n.
New York Globe, The, 165, 188n.
New York Herald, 235
*New York Historical and Genea-
 logical Register*, 12n.
 New York Historical Society, 11n.,
 105n., 121n., 124, 136n., 158,
 162-64, 180n., 208n., 212n.,
 213n., 214, 217n., 248n., 271
*New York Historical Society, Pro-
 ceedings for 1843*, 158n.
*New York in the Nineteenth Cen-
 tury* (Samuel Osgood), 58n.
 New York Legislature, 36
New-York Mirror, The, 36, 36n.,
 60, 63, 87, 90, 90n., 113-16, 119,
 130, 138, 223, 263, 271
 New York Public Library, 5n., 69n.,
 108n., 207n., 267n., 277n., 281n.
New York Quarterly, The, 213,
 213n.
New York Review, The, 79, 86
*New York State's Prominent and
 Progressive Men* (Mitchell C.
 Harrison), 7n.
New-York Tribune, The, 140n.,
 142, 186, 186n., 232, 273, 273n.
 Niblo's Garden, New York, 118,
 118n., 195
 "Nightingale Club," 194
 "Night on the Enchanted Moun-
 tains, A" (Hoffman), 45, 121
 "Nights in an Indian Lodge"
 (Hoffman), 121, 302n.
 Niobe, 93
 Noah, 135n.
Norman Leslie (Theodore S. Fay),
 102, 255
 North, Christopher, 147
North American Review, The, 142,
 146n., 172
 Northern States, 33n.
 North River, 157, 272
 "Notes on New Books" (column in
Daily National Intelligencer),
 263n.
Notions of the Americans
 (Cooper), 59
 O'Callaghan, Edmund Bailey, 1n.,
 4n., 106-7, 179
*Odd Fellows' Offering for 1848,
 The* (ed. by James L. Ridgely
 and Paschal Donaldson), 315n.
 Ogden, Gertrude Gouverneur, 4.
See also Gouverneur, Gertrude.
 ———, John, 4
 ———, Sarah, 4. *See also* Hoffman,
 Sarah Ogden
 "Oh Cherish Them All" (Hoff-
 man), 306-7
 Ohio, 47
 ——— River, 76
 Ojibwa, 315, 316n.
 "Old Ironsides" (*The Constitu-
 tion*), 8
Old New York (John W. Francis),
 11n., 158n.
Oliver Goldsmith (Irving), 60
Oliver Twist (Dickens), 121
 Onderdonk, Benjamin T., 256
*Oneota, or Characteristics of the
 Red Race of America* (Henry
 R. Schoolcraft), 258, 258n.,
 259, 312n., 314n.
 "On the Grave of a Friend"
 (Hoffman), 292
*Opal, A Pure Gift for the Holy
 Days, The*, 226, 232, 232n., 233
 n., 314n.
 Ophelia (character in *Hamlet*), 93,
 189n.
 Orange, Prince of, 5n.
 Oregon, 108

- Oregon Trail, The* (Francis Parkman), 108
 "Original of Scott's Rebecca, The" (Joseph Jacobs), 56n.
 Oriskany, Battle of, 128
 Osceola (Seminole Chief), 212
 Osgood, Samuel, 58n.
 O'Sullivan, 247
 Otis Broaders and Co., 84
 "Ouisconsin Territory," 50
Our Neighborhood, or Letters on Horticulture and Natural Phenomena, Interspersed with Opinions on Domestic and Moral Economy (E. Bliss), 94
Outlines of History from the Earliest Period to the Present Time (Dionysius Lardner), 94
 Overreach, Sir Giles (in Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*), 93
 "Over the Mountains" (Morris), 175
- Paine & Burgess, 269-70
 Palatinate, 2n.
 Palmerston, Lord Henry John Temple, 110, 110n.
 Paltsits, Victor Hugo, 14n.
 Panza, Sancho, 145, 235
Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, The, 35n.
 Paris, France, 20n.
 Parisian, 150
 Parker, Theodore, 265, 265n.
 Parkman, Francis, 106, 108-9, 282
 Parliament, British, 5n., 110
 Parnassus, 146
 Pascagoula Bay, Miss., 144n.
Passages from the Correspondence and Other Papers of Rufus W. Griswold (W. M. Griswold), 72n. and as *op. cit.*
 Paternoster Row, London, 97
Path on the Rainbow, The (ed. by George W. Cronyn), 316n.
- Patterson, A. D., 68
 Paulding, James K., 6n., 40n., 42, 61, 79, 98, 117, 165
 Pawnee (Pawnee) Indians, 256
 Payne, John Howard, 61
 Peabody, Major (character in *Vanderlyn*), 76
 Peabody and Company, 41
 Pearl Street, New York, 58
 Pelham (Bulwer), 94, 97
 Pennsylvania, 30, 49, 67, 186, 204
 Pennsylvania Historical Society, 78n., 85n., 89n., 108n., 188n., 196n., 199n., 215n., 221n., 279n.
 Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia, 185n.
 Percival, James Gates, 33
 Perrott, George, 20n.
Peveril of the Peak (Scott), 101
 Pfalz (a former German state), 2n.
 Philadelphia, Pa., 10, 13-14, 19, 56n., 67, 78n., 80-84, 85n., 111, 129, 138n., 141n., 150n., 154n., 175, 185n., 188n., 189, 191, 199n., 202, 222n., 227n., 229n., 231n., 238, 241, 245n., 246, 249-51, 251n., 252, 258, 259n., 261, 264, 269, 275n., 279, 287, 289, 289n., 310n., 311n., 314n.
 Philadelphian, 81
 Phillips, Mary E., 188n.
 Philological Society, 8-9
 Pickwickian, 164
 Piermont, John, 116
 ———, N. Y., 124, 217
 Pilgrims, 5, 178
 Pine Street, New York, 29, 193
Pioneers of New York, The (Hoffman), 159, 159n., 178, 178n., 179n., 184n.
 Pittsburgh, Pa., 49
Plays of Philip Massinger, The (W. Gifford), 95
 Pliny, 193

- Plymouth, Mass., 178
 ——— Rock, 159, 180
- Poe, Edgar Allan, 89, 89n., 117, 124n., 125n., 139, 139n., 146, 154, 180, 188n., 229n., 237n., 243n., 253n., 260, 263-64; letter of, 283-86
- Poems of Charles Fenno Hoffman, The, Collected and Edited by his Nephew, Edward Fenno Hoffman*, 176n., 289n.
- Poetical Scripture Sketches* (Willis), *see Sketches*
- Poetry of the Magyars* (John Bowring), 259n.
- "Poetry of Trade or Sunbeams from Cucumbers, The" (Hoffman), 168
- Poets and Poetry of America* (anonymous), 141n.
- Poets and Poetry of America, The* (R. W. Griswold), 20n., 23n. and as *op. cit.*, 71, 115, 141-42, 145, 148, 170, 221n., 223n., 224, 227n., 228n., 229n., 230, 230n., 231, 234, 245n., 248, 262
- Poets of America Illustrated by one of her Painters* (John Keese), 152
- Politian an Unfinished Tragedy* (Edgar Allan Poe, ed. T. O. Mabbott), 125n.
- Political Activities of Philip Freneau, The, John Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science* (Samuel E. Forman), 13n.
- Polk, James K., 248
- Popular Essays on Naval Subjects* (Alexander Slidell Mackenzie), 276n.
- Porter and Coates, 289n.
- Portland, Maine, 253
- "Portrait, A" (Hoffman), 247
- "Portraiture" (Gulian C. Verplanck), 78n.
- Postl, Karl, 138
- Poughkeepsie, N. Y., 4, 20, 20n.
- , County Clerk's Office, 3n.
- Prairie du Chien, Wis., 50
- Pratt, H. Z., 115
- Preston, William Campbell, 110
- "Primeval Woods" (Hoffman), 225, 225n., 241
- Princeton, The* (boat), 243
- Princeton, N. J., 204
- University, 106n.
- Proceedings of New York Historical Society, 1845*, 161n.
- "Prophetic" (Gulian C. Verplanck), 78n.
- Prose Writers of America, The* (R. W. Griswold), 227n., 276
- Protestant, 5n., 242
- Publications of the American-Jewish Historical Society*, 56n.
- Puritanism, 179
- Puritans, 153n., 179
- Putnam, George Haven, 109n.
- , George P., 111, 117
- Quakers, 143, 179
- Quarterly Review, The* (London), 66, 142, 147, 273
- Question of Copyright, The* (George Haven Putnam), 109n.
- Quinn, Arthur Hobson, 124n.
- Quixote, Don, 145, 235
- "Raise the Heart" (Hoffman), 152, 153
- Randolph, John, 254
- Rapelye, Martin, 262
- "Rationale of Verse, The" (Edgar Allan Poe), 89n.
- Raymond, H. J., 146n.
- Rebecca (character in *Ivanhoe*), 55n., 56n.
- Record of the Proceedings of the Board of Columbia College*, 24n.

- Rector Street, New York, 9
 Redfield, Justus Starr, 259, 264
 Redhook, N. Y., 3
 Red River, 254
Red Spur of the Ramapo (Hoffman), 182, 184
 "Reformer, The" (Cornelius Mathews), 281n.
 Renwick, James, 39
 "Resemblances" (Hoffman), 300
 Revel, on Gulf of Finland, 1
 Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, 262
 Revolution, 3, 20. *See also* Revolutionary War
 "Revolutionary Pledge," 3
 Revolutionary War, 4, 12, 126. *See also* American Revolution, Revolution
 Rhinelander, Philip, 295n.
 "Rhymes—On West Point" (Hoffman), 230n.
 "Rhymes to his Muse" (Hoffman), 31
 Rialto, 58
 Richard III, 93
Riches Without Wings (Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 226
Richmond Whig, The, 95
 Ridd, John (character in *Lorna Doone*), 74
 Ridgely, James L., 315n.
 Ridley, Susan, 26
 Riker, J. C., 272
Rise of the New West (Frederick Jackson Turner), 47n.
 Ritchie, Leigh, 94
 River Orchard, Albany, 194
 Robinson, Catherine, 248
 ———, W., 115
Rochester American, The, 276
 Rocky Mountains, 108
 Rodrocksville, Pa., 48
 Rogers, Samuel, 157
 Romagio, 198
 Roman, 94
Romance of History, France, The (Leigh Ritchie), 94
 Romani, Giorgio, 171
 "Room, Boys, Room" (Hoffman), 175
 "Rosalie Clare" (Hoffman), 79, 132, 174, 189n.
 Rosencrantz (character in *Hamlet*), 93
 "Rover, The," 237, 237n.
 Royal Society of Denmark, 160
 "Rufus Wilmot Griswold" (Jacob L. Neu), 227n.
 "Ruined Mill, The" (Emma C. Embury), 168
 Rusk, Ralph L., 86n.
 Rutgers Institute, 264

 St. Helena, 16
 St. Louis, Mo., 50
 St. Mark's Cathedral, Venice, 53
 Saint Nicholas Society, New York, 158n., 178-79, 180n., 184n.
 St. Paul, Minn., 19n.
 "St. Valentine's Day" (Hoffman), 138n.
Salmagundi (Washington Irving, William Irving, James K. Paulding), 6n.
 Saltillo, Mexico, 268
 Sands, Robert C., 40n., 42-43, 61, 79
 Santa Anna, Antonio Lopez de, 268
 Santander, Francisco de Paula, 39
 Sargent, Epes, 70
Saturday Museum, The, 229, 229n.
Saturday Review, The (London), 176, 176n., 289n.
 Saxendom (proposed name for United States), 164
 Saxton, Charles M., 257
 "Scenes and Sources of the Hudson, The" (Hoffman), 118-19
 Scharf, John Thomas, 12n., 242n.
 Schoolcraft, Henry R., 107, 160, 179, 216, 257-58, 258n., 259, 259n., 271, 312n.

- "Schools in American Literature,"
61
- Schroeder, J. F., 116
- Schuyler, Philip John, 277
- Scotch, 20
- Scotland, 99-101
- Scott, Leonora Cranch, 154n.
- Scott, Sir Walter, 55n., 56n., 75,
97-101, 166, 199, 259n., 260,
271
- , Winfield, 39, 120, 210-13,
217, 220
- Scottish, 20n., 99
- Scudder, Horace E., 155n., 278n.
- Sealsfield, Charles (Karl Postl),
138, 138n.
- Sedgwick, Catherine Maria, 26, 91
- , Theodore II, 26, 112
- Selections from the American Poets*
(Bryant), 141n.
- Selections from the Autobiography*
of Elizabeth Oakes Smith (ed.
by Mary Alice Wyman), 255n.
- Senate (U. S. Congress), 109, 112
- Senior, Nassau William, 100
- "Sentiment of Friendship" (Eliza-
beth Oakes Smith), 227
- "Sentiment of Self Sacrifice"
(Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 227
- Seward, William H., 215n.; letter,
214-15
- Shakespeare, William, 61, 227
- Shakespeareans, 256
- Shakespeare's Scholar, Words and*
Their Usages (Richard Grant
White), 274n.
- Sharp, T., 6n.
- Sholto (Hoffman family dog), 218
- Siamese Twins, The* (Bulwer),
94
- Signs of the Times*, 194, 197n., 199,
290n., 291n., 292n., 293n.
- Simms, William Gilmore, 125,
125n.
- Sinless Child, The* (Elizabeth
Oakes Smith), 225n., 226
- Sketches* (Willis), 37, 88, 197
- Sketches of America* (Henry B.
Fearon), 122n.
- "Sketches of Society" (Hoffman),
181
- "Sketches of the Local History of
New York" (Hoffman), 168
- Sketches over the Sea* (David
Dudley Field), 160
- "Sleighing Song" (Hoffman), 297-
98
- Sloughter, Henry, 5n., 160
- Smith, 107
- , Elizabeth Oakes, 104, 104n.,
105, 168, 188n., 225n., 226-27,
227n., 232, 232n., 259, 264, 287,
287n.
- , Horace, 91
- , James H., 20n.
- , Mr., 34
- , Philip H., 20n.
- , Seba, 258
- Solberg, Thorwald, 109n., 111n.
- "Soldier's Bride" (song), 17n.
- Some Personal Letters of Herman*
Melville (ed. by Meade Min-
nigerode), 185n.
- Somerset, Pa., 48
- "Song" (Hoffman), 224, 224n.;
poem, 293
- "Songs" (Hoffman), 171, 252, 270
- "Son of the Wilderness, The,"
282
- Southern Literary Journal*, 86n.
- Southern Literary Messenger, The*,
89n., 171-72
- Southern Review*, 86n.
- Southern Times, The*, 33n.
- Southey, Robert, 272n.
- South Sea Islander, 97
- Writing School, Boston, 12
- Spain, 100, 248
- Spanish, 72
- language, 30
- "Sparkling and Bright" (Hoff-
man), 90, 90n., 174, 252, 296n.

- Sparks, Jared A., 6n., 159, 214, 249, 254, 279
Spectator, The, 123
 "Spicy Cut-up of an Author, A" (Hoffman), 90
 "Spirit of Evil" (Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 259
Sportsman Magazine, The, 252
 Spreading Dew (character in *Greyslaer*), 127
 "Sprig of Wintergreen, The" (Hoffman), 310-11
 Spring Street, New York, 193
 Stamp Act Insurrection, 168
 Stanford, John, 6n.
 Stanford and Swords, 178n.
 Stanton, Theodore, 138n.
 "Stanzas" (Hoffman), 295n.; poem, 294
 Stephens, Mr., 214
 Stephens, John Lloyd, 276, 276n.
 Stevenson, Andrew, 110
 Stewart, Sir Wm. Drummond, 281n.
 Stone, William Leete (father), 105, 213, 213n.
 ———, William Leete (son), 8n., 9n.
Stories for Children (Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 287n.
 "Stories of Scenes and Sources of the Hudson" (Hoffman), 116
 Storm, Miss, 200
 "Streamlet, The" (Hoffman), 174
 Street, Albert B., 79, 257, 275
 Stringer, James, 244, 244n., 245-46, 252
Studies in English, No. 5, 227n.
 Stuyvesant, Peter, 214
 "Summer Wind" (Bryant), 157
 Sweden, 1
 Swift, Jonathan, 96, 146n.
 "Sybilline Leaf, A" (Hoffman), 298
 Syria, 219
 Tabernacle, New York, 178n., 180, 242
Talba, A Romance, The (Anna Eliza Kempe Bray), 94
 "Tale of a Snag, A" (Robert Montgomery Bird), 83
Tales of the Border (James Hall), 96
 Tallmadge, General, 164
 Tammany Hall, 7, 9, 209, 248
 "Tawasentha" (Hoffman), 274, 274n.
 Taylor, Bayard, 111, 155; letter to, 278
 ———, Marie Hansen-, 155n., 278n.
 ———, Zachary, 186, 267n.; letters, 267-68, 268
 Tennessee, 248
 Texas, 162
Thaw King's Visit to New York, The (Hoffman), 37n.
 Thayendanegea: *see also* Joseph Brant, 105
 "Thoughts, Thoughts" (Hoffman), 237, 237n.
Times, The, 170
 Tippecanoe (nickname of William Henry Harrison), 219
 "To ———" (Hoffman), 289-90, 291
 "To an Autumn Rose" (Hoffman), 138n.
 "To a Waterfowl" (Bryant), 157
 "To a Waxen Rose" (Hoffman), 175
 Tokeah (character in *Tokeah*), 138n.
Tokeah, or The White Rose (Charles Sealsfield), 138, 138n.
Token, The, 195, 196n., 199, 199n.
Token for 1842, The, 309n.
 "To the Hudson River" (Hoffman), 174
Tour on the Prairies, A (Irving), 59, 67

- "Town Repinings" (Hoffman), 138n.
- "Traveller, The" (Goldsmith), 170n., 256
- Treasury Department, 39, 136n.
- Trent, W. P., 125n.
- Trisman, Mr., 108
- Tuckerman, Bayard, 43n., 135n.
- , Henry Theodore, 66, 104n., 131, 136, 148n., 154, 154n., 163, 168, 170, 170n., 177n., 222, 225n., 230-31, 239, 243, 246, 252-53, 254n., 257, 263-64, 271
- Turner, Frederick Jackson, 47n.
- "Twin-Doomed, The" (Hoffman), 113, 121
- Two American Pioneers, Seba Smith and Elizabeth Oakes Smith* (Mary Alice Wyman), 104n.
- Tyler, John, 219
- , Robert, 247
- Typee* (Melville), 104
- Ulster County, N. Y., 2
- Union, 33, 33n., 40n., 51, 81, 143, 212, 214, 220
- United States, Official Register of the, 136n., 187
- , Ordnance Survey, 123
- Stateser (suggested name for citizen of United States), 161, 164
- United States Gazette, The*, 12^a13, 14n., 15n., 16, 153
- United States History of the Early Settlement of New York* (E. B. O'Callaghan), 107
- United States Magazine, The*, 70
- United States Magazine and Democratic Review, The*, 240, 240n.
- University of Pennsylvania, Library of, 83, 84n., 210n.
- University of Texas Bulletin No. 2538, 227n.
- of the State of New York, 3
- "Value of the Union, The," 33n.
- Van Buren, Martin, 163, 197, 199, 207, 238
- Vandegrift, Margaret (nom de plume of Margaret Thomson Janvier), 240n.
- Vanderlyn, Washington (character in "Vanderlyn"), 73-76, 307n.
- "Vanderlyn, A Novel" (Hoffman), 72n. *See also* "Vanderlyn, or the Fortunes of an Adventurer"
- "Vanderlyn, or the Fortunes of an Adventurer" (Hoffman), 41n., 72, 72n., 84, 120n.
- Vanderpool, Miss., 77
- Van Erinstein, Gertrude, 261
- Van Ness, Cornelius Peter, 137, 248
- Van Poeng, Hans (nom de plume of Hoffman), 297
- Van Rensselaer, Gratz, 55n., 56n., 211
- Van Schaick, John B., 26, 37, 38n., 77, 77n., 88-89, 205n., 206n., 290n., 304n.; letters to, 194-96, 196-99, 205-7, 209
- Van Tromp family, 214
- Van Wyck, Pierre C., 9
- Venus, 231
- Vermont, 137
- Vermonters, 260
- Verplanck, Gulian C., 35n., 40, 40n., 61, 72n., 78, 78n., 79, 98, 108, 117, 199, 208n., 238, 254n.; letters to, 207-8, 247-48
- Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* (Robert Chambers), 255, 256n.
- "Vigil of Faith, The" (Hoffman), 138, 138n., 139, 142, 170n., 172-73, 225, 247, 256

- Vigil of Faith and Other Poems, The* (Hoffman), 138, 170, 170n., 173, 230, 230n., 237, 239, 245-46, 254, 258, 258n., 270, 272n., 273n.
- Vindex (possibly pseudonym of Hoffman), 206, 206n.
- Virginia, 31, 47, 67, 203
- "Visit from St. Nicholas, A" (Clement C. Moore), 79
- Vivian (obscure reference to Robert Chambers), 255
- Vivian Grey* (Disraeli), 198, 198n.
- Voltaire (François Marie Arouet), 283
- "Vondel: A Tale of Old Manhattan" (Hoffman), 169
- Wainwright, Jona W., 106n.
- Wakondah; the Master of Life*, 244n.
- Waldron, W. W., 16n.
- Wallace, A. R., 287
- Waller, Edmund, 175, 222
- "Waller to Sacharissa" (Hoffman), 241
- Wall Street, New York, 27n., 62, 166
- Walsh, Robert M., 85
- Wandering Strains from the Lyre of the North* (Randolph Hulbert), 255n.
- War of 1812, 8, 11
- Ward, Samuel, 106n.
- Warren Street, New York, 62
- Warwick, Guy of, 223
- Washington, George, 9, 14, 18n., 49, 209, 210n., 281
- , D. C., 136n., 186, 188, 208n., 238, 243-44, 248, 263n., 267-68
- Washington and his Generals* (Joel Tyler Headley), 276n.
- Washington and his Generals of the Revolution* (Griswold), 275n., 276, 277n.
- Washington Irving and Contemporaries in Thirty Life Sketches* (W. W. Waldron), 16n.
- "Washington Irving and Matilda Hoffman" (Stanley T. Williams), 19n.
- Washington Irving Esquire* (George S. Hellman), 11n.
- "Watchers, The" (Hoffman), 306
- Watson, Henry Cood, 263
- Waverley novels, 56n., 100
- Webb, James Watson, 280-81, 281n.
- Webster, Daniel, 33, 109, 117, 265
- , Noah, 9, 117
- "Weekly Review" (column in *New-York American*), 43
- Wellington, Arthur Wellesley, Duke of, 166
- West, the, 45-48, 53, 58, 62, 65, 68, 76, 98, 108, 117, 157, 174, 293
- Westchester County, N. Y., 4, 7
- Westcott, Thompson, 12n., 242n.
- Western Captive, The* (Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 226
- Western Literary Journal, The*, 86n.
- Western Messenger, The*, 86n.
- Western Monthly Magazine, The*, 86n.
- Western Monthly Review, The*, 86n.
- West Point, N. Y., 208, 208n., 230, 247
- "What is Solitude?" (Hoffman), 138n., 302n.; poem, 302-4
- Wheeling, W. Va., 48
- Whig Review, The*, 98-99
- Whigs, 77n., 126, 133, 209, 215, 268
- Whipple, E. P., 231
- White (ed. of *The Alleghanian*), 263
- , Richard Grant, 274, 274n.
- "Who, Maiden?" (Hoffman), 301-2
- "Wife, The," 77
- Wilbur, Reverend H., 92

- Wild Scenes in the Forest and Prairie* (Hoffman), 44n., 45n., 113, 116, 119-20, 122, 129, 131, 147, 157, 189n., 210n., 213, 216, 302n.
- Wiley, Charles, 62
- Wiley and Putnam, 245, 252, 275, 277, 282
- Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (Goethe), 92
- Wilkes, John, 254
- Wilkinson, Marguerite, 316n.
- Willard, Sidney, 70
- William Gilmore Simms* (W. P. Trent), 125n. and as *op. cit.*
- William Street, New York, 166
- Williams, John, 92
- , Stanley T., 11n., 19n.
- Willis, Nathaniel Parker, 37, 60, 63, 88-89, 89n., 90, 90n., 115, 117, 194-95, 196n., 197, 199n., 232n., 233n., 242, 242n.
- Wilson, James Grant, 6n., 9n., 13n., 62n., 71, 116n., 117n., 166n.
- , Woodrow, 5n.
- Winsor, Justin, 12n.
- Wintergreen, The, A Perennial Gift for 1844*, 311n.
- Winter in the West, A* (Hoffman), 24, 45n., 50n., 51n., 54, 54n., 65-66, 97, 124n., 125n., 131, 147, 157
- Wistar family, 222
- "Witch of Endor, The" (Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 226
- Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (Sarah Margaret Fuller), 256
- "Women of the Mayflower, The" (Elizabeth Oakes Smith), 168
- Woolson, Lulu May Fenno, 12n.
- Woolson Fenno Ancestry* (Lulu May Fenno Woolson), 12n.
- Wordsworth, William, 101, 271
- Works of Fisher Ames* (ed. by Seth Ames), 14n.
- Worth, William Jenkins, 212
- Writers of Knickerbocker New York, The* (H. W. Mabie), 59n.
- Wyman, Mary Alice, 104n., 255n.
- Yale University, Library of, 220n., 280n.
- Yankeeedom (proposed name for United States), 164
- Yankee Doodle (proposed name for United States), 162-63
- Yankeeism, 265
- Yankees, 103, 147, 205, 214, 256, 262, 265
- Yates, 107
- Year in Spain, A* (Alexander Slidell Mackenzie), 40, 72n., 276n.
- "Yellow Jack" (Hoffman), 233n.
- Yellowstone River, 50
- Yelverton, Anthony, 3n.
- Yemassee, The* (W. G. Simms), 102
- Young Men's Convention, 77n.
- Zieber, G. B., 245, 245n.
- Zophiel; or, The Bride of Seven* (Maria Gowen Brooks), 272n.

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